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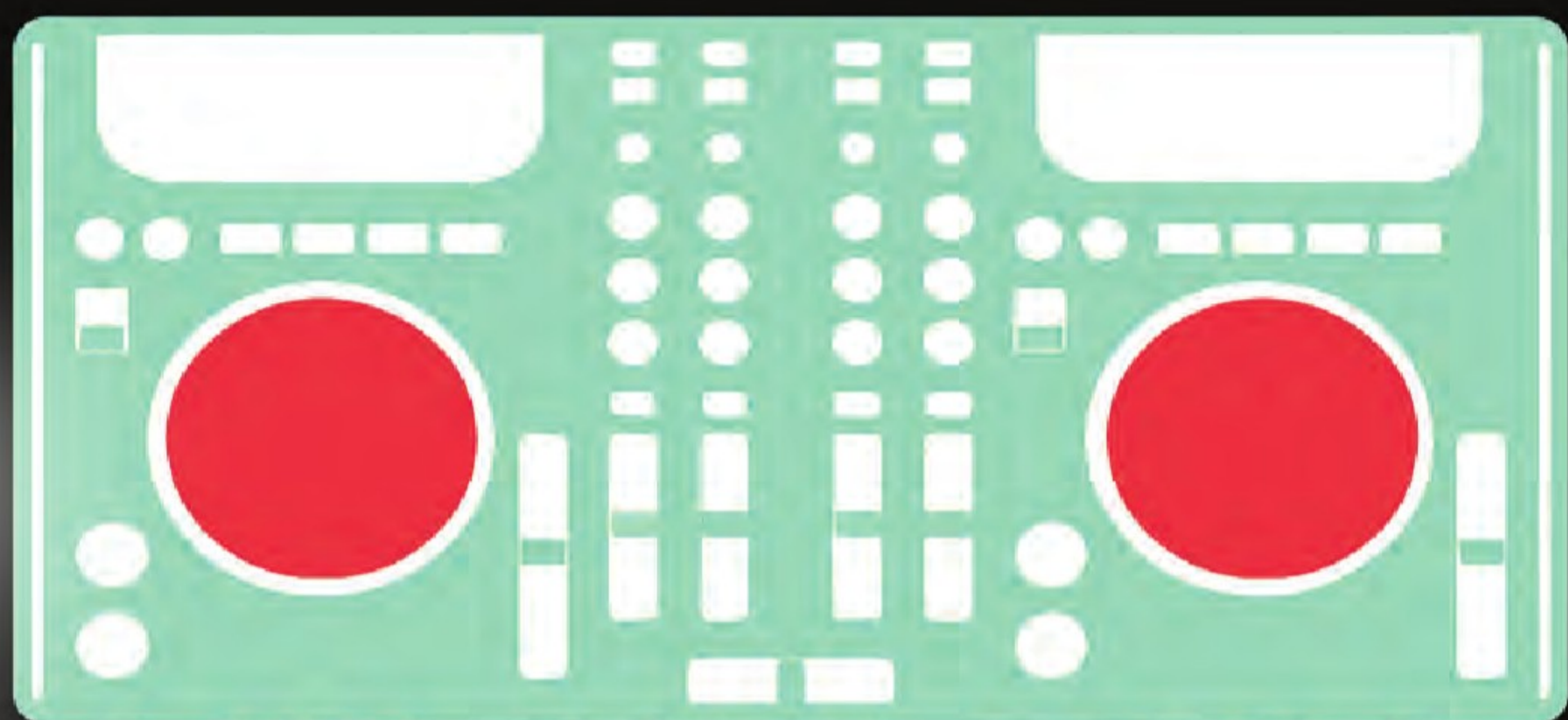
THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE • WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

ISSUE 160 DECEMBER 2014

WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

**The
Game
Changes**

**Feb 23-26
2015**



**MOBILE BEAT
LAS VEGAS**



MBLV EVENT EDITION

PRESENTERS • ENTERTAINERS • INFORMATION

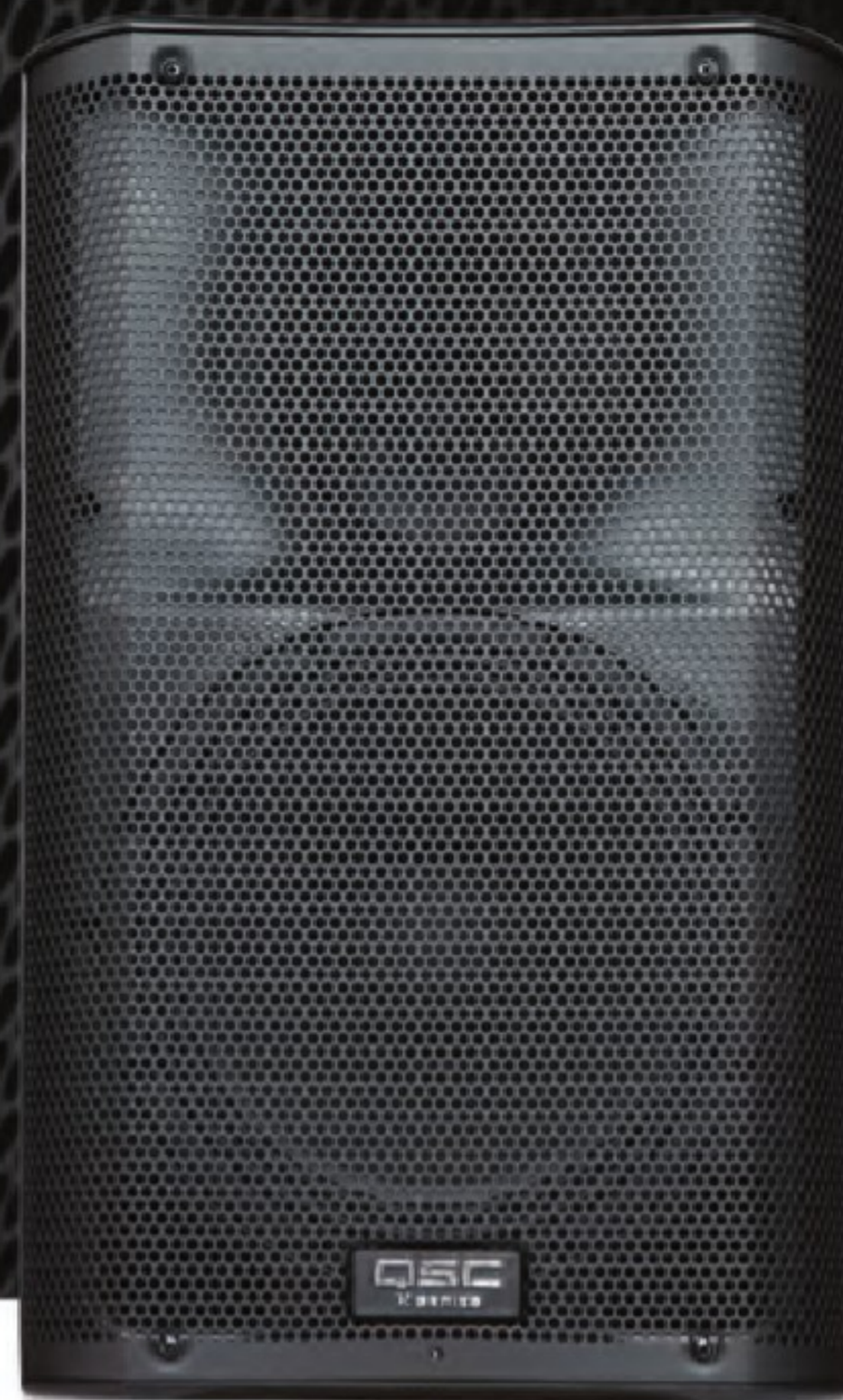
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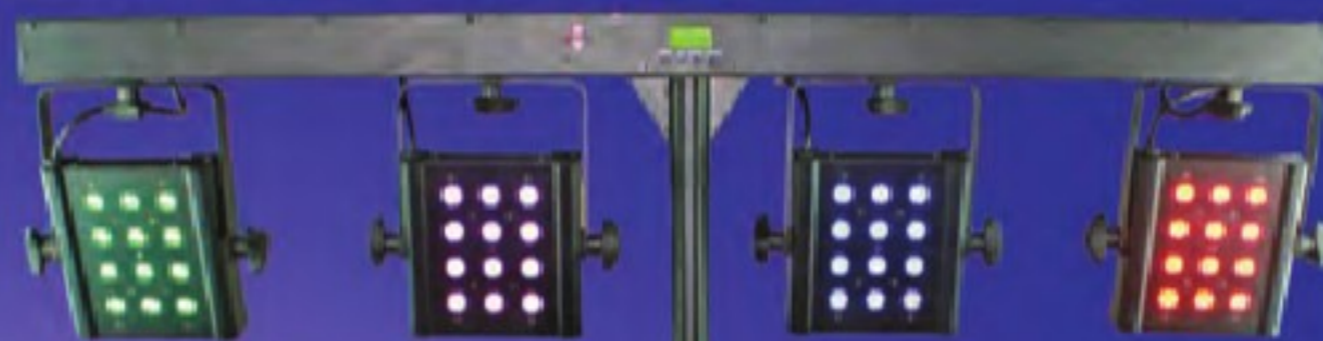
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ABOUT MOBILE BEAT LAS VEGAS

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Penn Jillette
Gary Shapiro
Bill Hermann & Jason Jones
Mark Ferrell
Joe Bunn

Performers STARTING ON PAGE 27

Sir Mix-A-Lot
DJ Jazzy Jeff
Jason Jani

Look for more info and updates on exhibitors, entertainment and the following presenters and in the **next issue** of Mobile Beat:

Ben Stowe
Josh Yawn
Carr Haggerman
Bryan Dodge

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MBLV PROUDLY PRESENTS **PENN JILLETTE?**

MOBILE BEAT
LAS VEGAS **MBLV**
February 23-26, 2015

The game continues to change!

The legendary **Penn Jillette**, widely known as one half of the duo Penn & Teller, will be appearing at Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2015.

After decades of performing to sold out, live crowds, Mr. Jillette is a consummate expert in the trade of not only enteratining, but constructing a show and keeping it fresh to stand the test of time.

See Penn Jillette present in person at Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2015. It will change your business forever.

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JILLETTE JANI HERMANN STOWE JONES SHAPIRO FERRELL YAWN BUNN SCHENK DODGE HAGERMAN BUONACCORSO JAZZY JEFF SIR MIX A LOT

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TRACK ONE

As MBLV's producer since the very beginning back in 1997, if anybody ever told me there would be a Mobile Beat event that included Penn Jillette, DJ Jazzy Jeff, Sir Mix-A-Lot, a dedicated duo of MCs in a stunning, redesigned arena, and a lineup of presentations where each one was a home run, I would say it was a nice dream but not within the realm of possibility.

Well, the 2015 Mobile Beat Las Vegas WILL be all that and more... There is no keynote. With a cast of true "All-Stars" so dynamic you won't want to miss anything, no one shares a timeslot with filler, because it's all killer! Plus, you can spend time in a spectacular exhibit hall with new hours designed so you can make the most of your time.

In this issue, you'll learn a little bit about the people who are part of this event, as well as get a sampling of the material they have to offer. Some are industry favorites; some are relatively new on the national scene; and some are from outside the industry but have a different spin on fundamental principles of business and entertaining.

To say this show will be phenomenal is an understatement. If you value yourself, your business and your future, find a way to get to Las Vegas, February 23-26, 2015. Pass prices increase December 31, so act soon for maximum savings. You won't want to miss out on this totally re-imagined MBLV event. Hope to see you there!

— Michael Buonaccorso, MBLV Producer

Mobile Beat

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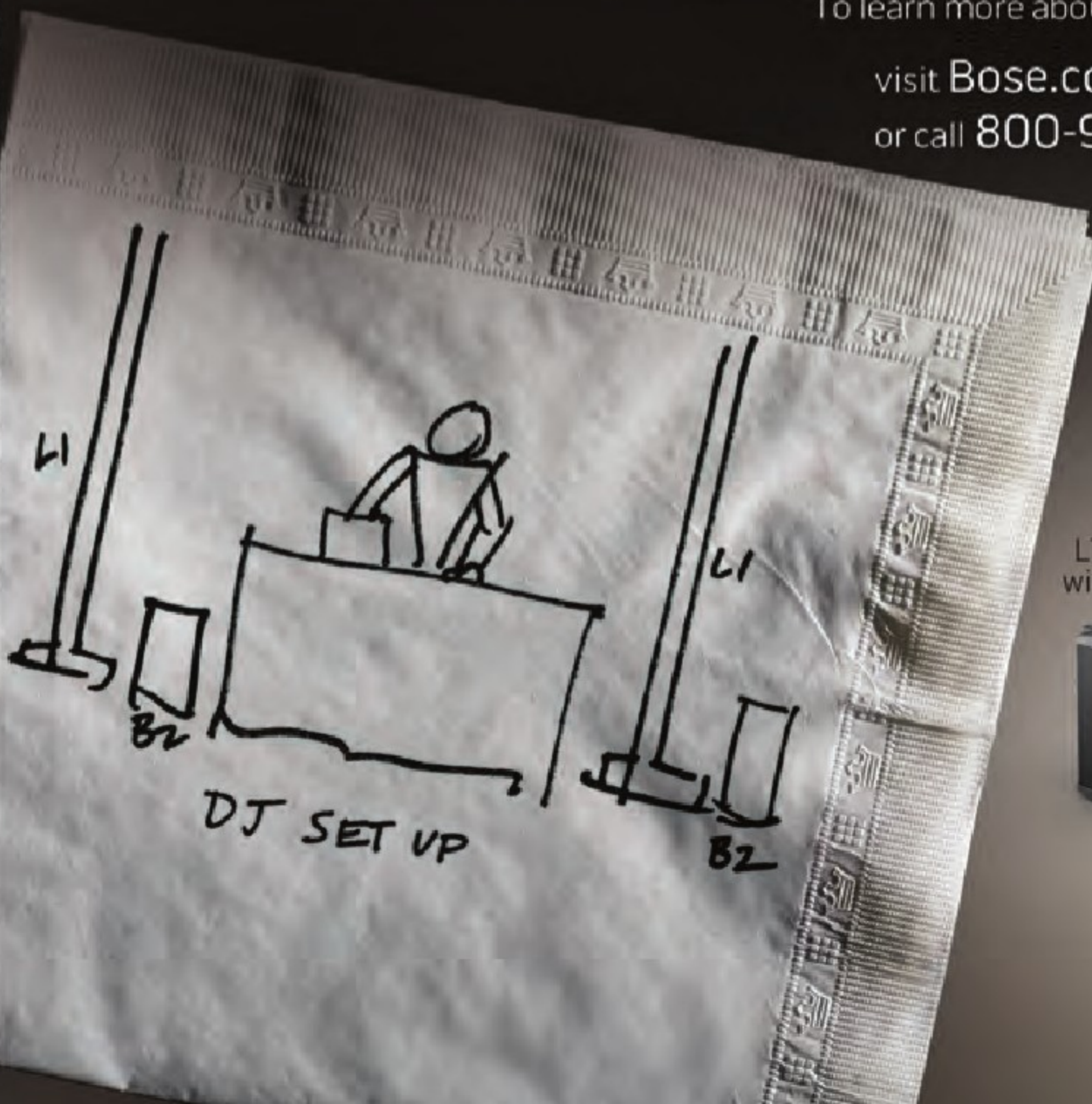
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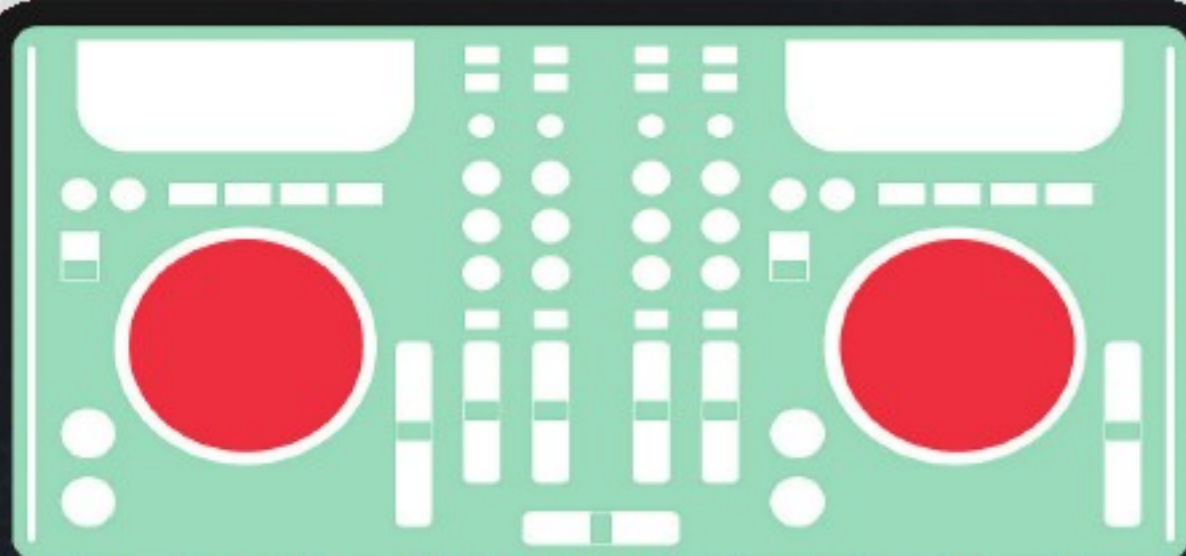


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**The
Game
Changes**

February 2015

MBLV SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TIME	EVENT	PRESENTER
MONDAY • 2/23		
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM	MBLV Registration • Monday	
1:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Meet the Hosts of Mobile Beat Las Vegas	
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Ninja Innovation	Gary Shapiro
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM	5 Things Your Mother Never Told You About Being a DJ	Ben Stowe
3:45 PM - 4:45 PM	The Ultimate Host	Josh Yawn
5:00 PM - 5:45 PM	DigiGames • Sponsored Seminar	
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM	CHAUVET DJ • Sponsored Seminar	
TUESDAY • 2/24		
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM	MBLV Registration • Tuesday	
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Ownership	Bill Hermann
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Who Do You Think You Are?	Mark Ferrell
11:45 AM - 12:45 PM	Top Performer: Plan Less—Succeed More!	Carr Haggerman
1:15 PM - 2:00 PM	<i>The Bill and Jason Show Live</i> webcast from outside the exhibit hall	
2:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Expo Floor • Tuesday	
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM	An Evening with Legends: DJ Jazzy Jeff & Sir Mix-A-Lot	
WEDNESDAY • 2/25		
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM	MBLV Registration • Wednesday	
9:00 AM - 9:45 AM	Photo Party Upload • Sponsored Seminar	
9:00 AM - 9:45 AM	QSC • Sponsored Workshop	
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Every Little Thing You Do Is Magic	Joe Bunn
10:45 AM - 11:45 AM	The State vs. John Q. DJ	Rob Schenk, Esq.
12:45 PM - 1:45 PM	MBLV presents our special guest, Penn Jillette	
2:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Expo Floor • Wednesday	
11:00 PM - ???	Club Night at Surrender	
THURSDAY • 2/26		
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	MBLV Registration - Thursday	
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	The Power of Your Point of View	Jason Jones
10:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Success is a Journey, Not a Destination!	Bryan Dodge
1:30 PM - 2:00 PM	MB Hall of Fame 2015 Inductee Presentation Mega Giveaways • 2016 Preview	
* ALL INFORMATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME *		



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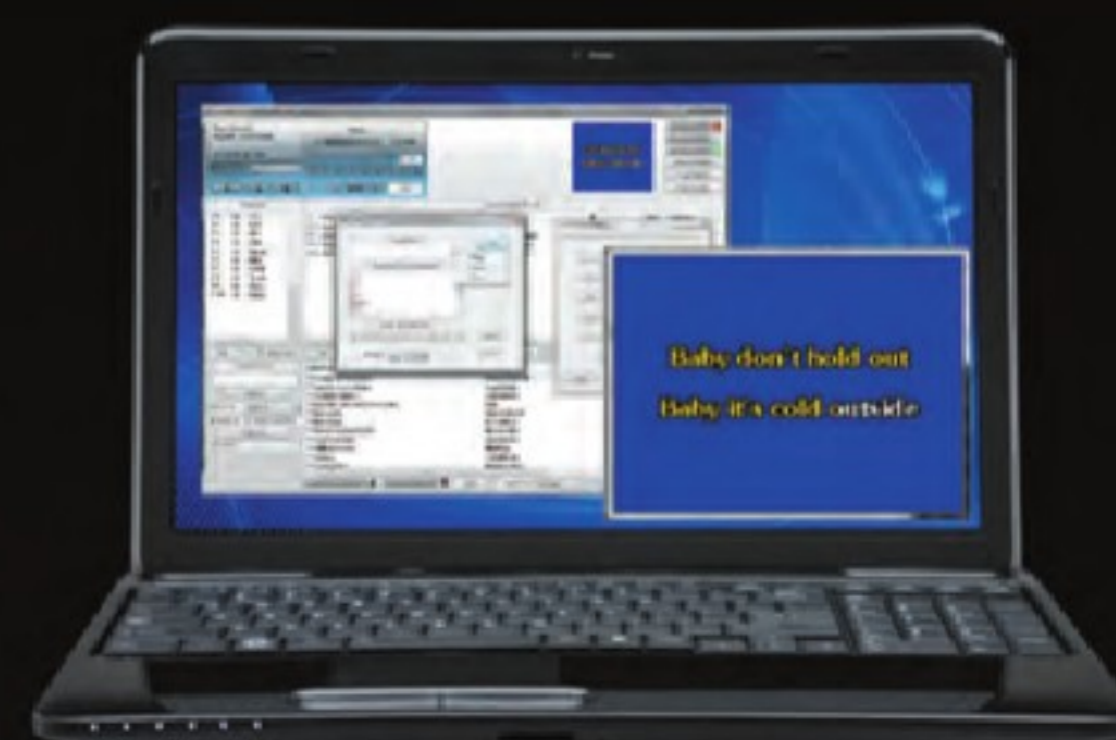
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The Art of Reinvention

WHAT POSSIBILITIES ARE YOU OPEN TO?

By Mike Ficher

My father enjoyed only two occupations in his 45 years of work. For most of his life, the third child of a Mexican mother and a Portuguese father was a glazier, first in the private sector working alongside childhood friends, then later in the public sector with the San Francisco school district. In between those two lengthy stays, he delivered cold cuts and meat to butcher shops, grocery stores and delicatessens.

He had one hobby—fishing. I have fond memories of dragging fish behind me on the beaches on the Pacific Ocean at night while my father surveyed, assessed and cast out into the waters in search of—usually successfully—salmon and more.

No part-time jobs. No other activities. Just fishing. For life. He was a man who found his hobby and his career at a young age and kept life simple.

A DIFFERENT DRUMMER

I played in my first organized baseball game at age 44. I entered the world of improvisation at age 47. I returned to umpiring baseball at age 48. I initiated what has now become a modestly syndicated oldies radio show at age 48. I started doing sports broadcasting at age 49. I played a cross dressing fortune teller in a movie at age 50. I appeared in my first stage production at age 51. I commenced officiating soccer at age 53.

While in some ways I am my father's son, in many ways, I have gone off the script of my family and, partially leveraging the experience, skills and vision gained from being a part-time mobile entertainer for more than 20 years, I reinvented myself later in life.

THE SAME OLD SONG

You've been a mobile entertainer for years. How many times have you reinvented yourself?

• I have appeared in ten stage productions and fifteen murder mystery presentations during the last six-plus years.

When you started in the business, you were a mobile disc jockey. Just the novelty and willingness to establish an on-site presence and play records carved out a respectable part-time living or fulfilling hobby.

Soon disco changed the mobile dynamic. Yes, the novelty of on-site presence was still strong, but now you could mix beats live, with songs tailored to allow another talent to shine. The mobile DJ could now be an attraction rather than merely a facilitator.

• I have appeared in five films and several commercials since the cross-dressing screen debut.

Dances like the Hustle, Bus Stop and Electric Slide opened opportunities

When and where will your next reinvention occur?

for mobiles to expand their offerings to an intrigued and open public. Greater value could be presented to clients—disc jockeys now ventured beyond the console to the floor. From attraction, DJs could now be a contributing star.

With technology offering increasing choices for audio delivery—cassette, DAT, minidisc, compact disc, and, MP3—and equipment progressing to leaner, efficient and more affordable, the bar to enter the mobile trade lowered, allowing increasing competition and prompting choices on market positioning.

Volume? Specialists? High-end? Who or what are you going to be?

• I have umpired local, regional, tournament, and state games in the last several years, including an assignment on the state championship game in 2014.

The industry matured, the novelty long since eclipsed by growing perception of utility. In the search for differentiation, disc jockeys added magic, dance instruction, stories, games, raffles, increasing emcee emphasis, dance performances and more to offer greater value to clients and varied entertainment to guests. The true “mobile entertainer” emerged.

• I have called more than 200 football, basketball, soccer, softball, baseball and volleyball games on radio and television during the last nine years.

Portable and affordable video recording and transmission, home theater, social media, iPods, YouTube and music services have individualized the entertainment experience. We can become stars in our own productions. Entertainers are now producers and directors in addition to music programmers.

The music may serve a different purpose, too. Instead of strictly encouraging dance, music increasingly may serve as an environmental enhancer, an event soundtrack, and a reflector of mood. Sometimes, all during the same event.

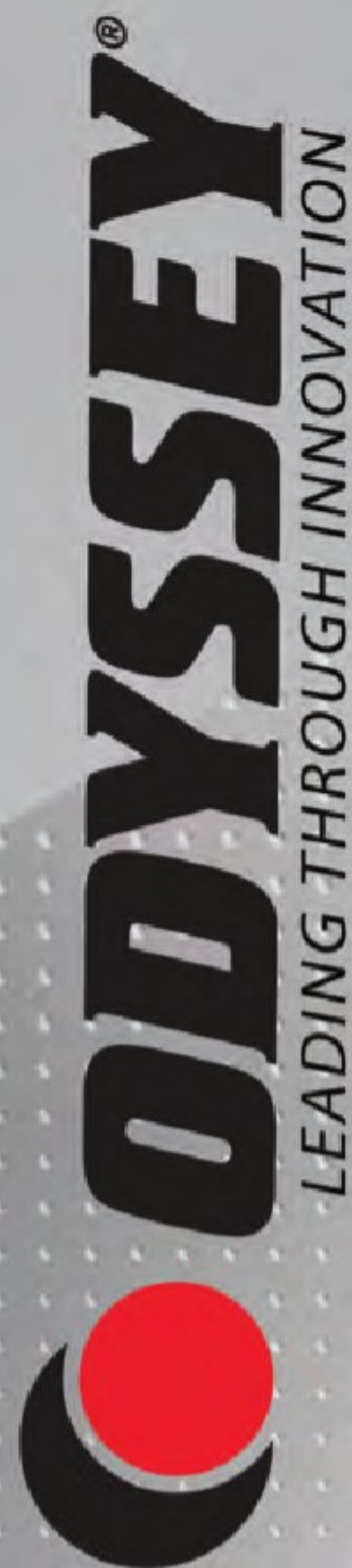
• The Ultimate Oldies Show is now heard on eight radio stations in four states and daily on a website.

When and where will your next reinvention occur? What excitement, challenges and opportunities will that produce?

Are you father or son? **MB**



A business analyst by day, Mike Ficher is an actor, voice artist, MC, sportscaster, public address announcer and former mobile entertainer. He is also the host of the weekly syndicated radio program, *The Ultimate Oldies Show*. Mike synthesizes these varied experiences to illuminate historic connectivity and fresh perspectives on the mobile entertainment profession. More info at mikeficher.com.



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3 Wedding Blogs You Should Be Reading

PLUS A BUNCH OF GREAT WAYS TO BENEFIT FROM THEM

By DJ Staci Nichols

I know, I know... like you're not busy enough downloading new music, dealing with clients and coordinators, figuring out why that one button on your mixer isn't doing what it is supposed to do, etc., etc... Now I'm going to suggest squeezing in a few extra minutes per week to keep up with wedding blogs. Sigh!

To start, over 90% of wedding blog readers are female. Since (and I'm guessing here), about 90% of wedding DJs are not female, wedding blogs are a great place to get in touch with your Venus side. You have no idea how much this sentence will help you during sales meetings: "I just read about that the other day on *Rustic Wedding Chic*..." Do you think other DJs in your market are dropping that phrase often? Don't just name-drop, but actually learn new tricks, get inspired, and discover valuable marketing material.

OFFBEAT BRIDE

I can't say enough good things about *Offbeat Bride*. They focus on practical wedding advice, real-world information (ie, how to pee unassisted while wearing a wedding dress), and, as they call it, "wedding porn"—beautiful wedding photography.

So you don't have blue hair and an eyebrow ring? No worries. *Offbeat Bride* is for couples that don't want to have a cookie cutter wedding experience and may not fit into the traditional demographic other blogs target (such as same-sex couples, interracial couples, older couples, couples who already have children, and—yes—blue-haired couples.)

I also appreciate that I can subscribe to *Offbeat Bride* via email (no RSS required) and have it delivered straight to my inbox. Be sure to sign up for their brand-spankin' new segment "Offbeat Industry," about which Ariel Stallings, the blog's founder, spoke at the 2014 Wedding MBA.

HUFFPOST WEDDINGS

The wedding blog on *Huffington Post* is the best of both worlds because they invite top wedding bloggers from around the industry to regularly contribute. So you can read all of the wedding blog superstars in one place—can't beat that. Regular

contributors include *Offbeat Bride*, *The Knot*, *Martha Stewart Weddings*, and *Style Me Pretty*. Plus, lots of other top-notch bloggers make guest contributions.

STYLE ME PRETTY

SMP needs no introduction. They set the bar that virtually every other wedding blog seeks to replicate. Business Insider refers to *SMP* as "a wedding blog that brides are obsessed with." They have 1.4 million visitors a month to prove it.



Despite this, most readers have a love-hate relationship with *SMP* in the same way they do with Pinterest. They feel pressured by the unrealistically high standards they see on *SMP*, yet can't stop reading.

Referring to itself as "the ultimate wedding blog," *SMP* will only allow approved companies to advertise with them. Mine didn't make the cut!

WEDDING BLOG READERS ARE IDEAL CLIENTS

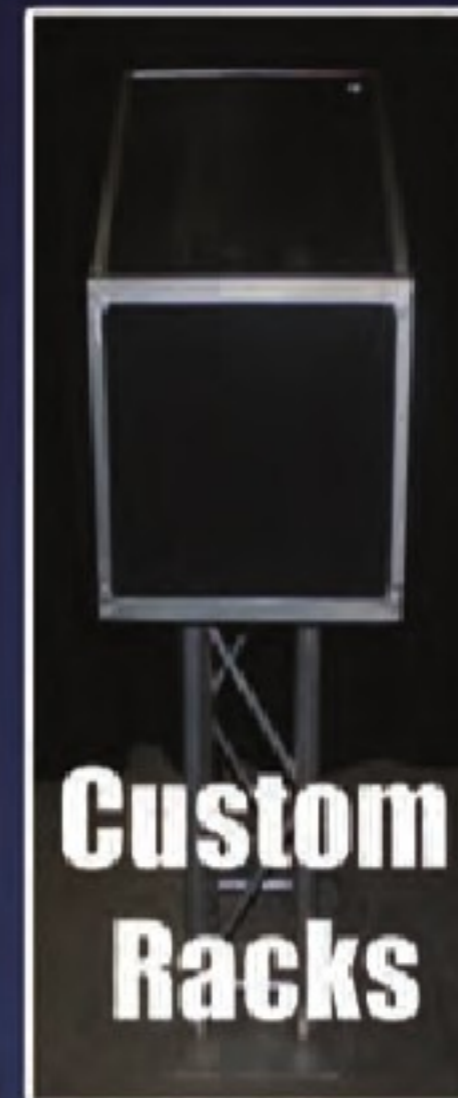
- • Wedding Chicks reports that 70% of their readers have higher education and 1/3 make over \$100,000/year.
- • Rock N Roll Bride reports that 25% of readers have booked vendors featured on their blog.

Wedding Chicks and *Rock N Roll Bride* are by no means reporting extraordinary results—these statistics are common. Wedding blog readers, millions per month, are the savvy, detail-obsessed clients that "get it," generally speaking. They do not



DJ and Officiant Staci Nichols owns *Revolution Weddings* and *Country Wedding DJ* in San Diego. Her wedding know-how has appeared on *Wed Loft*, *Offbeat Bride*, the *Gig Masters Wedding Blog*, *Wedding Planner Magazine*, *Brides Without Borders*, and others. Even though you might catch her hosting the *Stagecoach Festival's Honky Tonk* or DJing at a local club, she's a wedding junkie through and through.

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Staci with Ariel Stallings, founder of Offbeat Bride, at Wedding MBA 2014

tend to be what Stephanie Padovani would call “price shoppers.”

If you do decide to advertise on a blog, you'll also get a distinctive badge for your website saying “As Seen on Wed Loft” or “Green Wedding Shoes Preferred Wedding Artist.” Everyone has their Wedding Wire, Yelp, and The Knot badges—stand out with a different form of recognition! I've advertised with many blogs, and my best ROI has come from *Offbeat Bride* (I book about 1 wedding a month from them for a monthly advertising rate of \$25!) By more closely associating yourself with the type of clients you want to attract, you gain a better understanding of their “wedding planning world,” and you can talk to them in their own language. **MB**

Be sure to also check out ...

- The Top 100 wedding blogs at **WeddingBlogs100.com**
- The only music-focused wedding blog that I'm aware of at **HiFiWeddings.com**
- Your **local wedding blogs**, where it's easier to get your weddings published (free publicity and another great “as seen on” badge for your website)
- **BitchlessBride.com**: On a bad day, the “vendor rants” section can be the best therapy around

Using Reviews to Grow Your Wedding Business

By Gabrielle Rolon, *The Knot*, Director of Education

Did you know that millennials are 86 million-strong in the US? That's the largest generation in US History—and that means, they are your most important customers right now! They're a fascinating generation who are obsessed with technology, and love to show off their unique and personal style. What's more, they value authenticity, and trust the authentic voice of peer reviews when making purchase decisions.

As a wedding professional, how do you get reviews?

Here are some helpful do's and don'ts to follow:

DO:

- *Mention the desire to be reviewed.*
- *Email customers with simple directions on where to leave a review.*
- *Feel free to offer a small gift or discount off of future services.*
- *Consider surveys as additional source of feedback.*

DON'T

- *Have customers write reviews within your place of business.*
- *Have customers write reviews prior to services being offered (A positive review in exchange for discounts is prohibited.)*

- *Use contracts including a “positive review only” clause. (It reflects poorly on your business, and customers need the true story.)*

Did you know that negative reviews are valuable too?

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Do you want to hear more about how reviews can grow your business? Go to The Knot B2B blog at <http://b2b.xogroupinc.com/> and search “reviews” for many more ideas. **MB**



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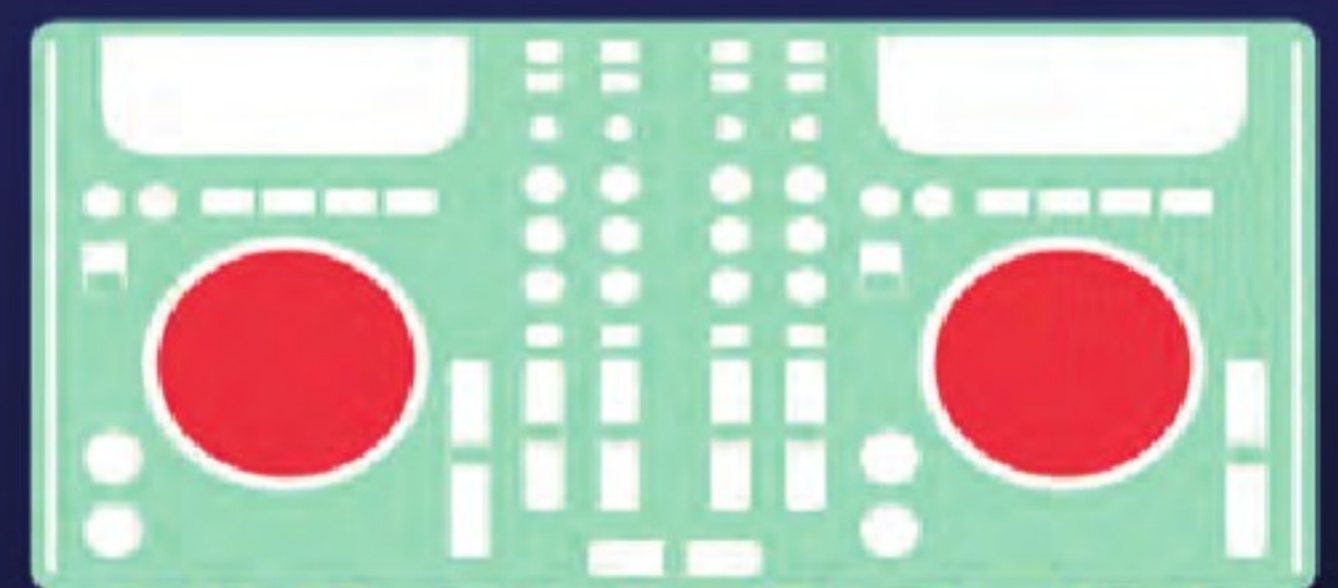
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History of the Ever-Popular Game Show

By Dror Klar

Who in their right mind would not love the opportunity to get rich quick and get to be on television at the same time? That would be someone who probably does not like game shows. But it would be difficult indeed to find someone who does not like at least one game show.

The first game shows were heard over the radio, back in those earliest days of broadcast media, of course. These were all quiz shows, with names like The Pop the Question Game, Do You Know, and Ask Me Another. These radio game shows were popular from the 1920s through the 1940s. Later shows, like Break the Bank and Quiz Kids (which featured five clever youngsters as contestants for each episode) bridged the period from radio to television, making the transition from audio-only to audio-plus-video.

When television was installed in majority of households by the 1950s or so, game shows became even more popular. The most well known from this era is arguably You Bet Your Life, which began as a radio show in 1947, then moved to television in 1950.

The show was hosted by George Fenneman and he was aided in his grilling of contestants by the famous comedian Groucho Marx. Marx was so funny that people would tune in

just to watch him. Contestants had the opportunity to win up to \$10,000 dollars (pretty big money in those days).

Queen for a Day was another of the most popular early game shows, hosted by Jack Bailey. Four contestants told of their hardships and the winner could get prizes like washing machines for their efforts. (This show also had its roots in radio and later moved to television.)

The most well-known quiz show of all, Jeopardy, debuted in 1964 with Art Fleming as host. The original version ran until 1979. It was restarted with Alex Trebek at the mic in 1984, and shows no signs of waning in popularity any time soon.

The "liberated" '60s not surprisingly saw the introduction of game shows, like The Newlywed Game, The Match Game and The Dating Game, that relied more on the relationships and the (often risqué) humor that could result from contestants' answers to leading questions.

The 1970s saw the birth of many shows that are still popular today or have been recreated for new generations, including The Price Is Right, Family Feud and Let's Make a Deal.

Today's game shows have differences and similarities with those of the past. Similar are the celebrities that contestants get to meet, the fun they get to have, and the kinds of questions they have to answer or stunts they have to do to win. The biggest thing that has changed is the amount of prizes and

money that can be won. (Of course, comparing then and now, the value might work out to be pretty much the same in most cases.)

Although it seemed that game shows might have been less popular for a while, with the exception of long-running shows like Wheel of Fortune and The Price is Right, When Who Wants to Be a Millionaire came on in 1999, hosted by Regis Philbin, it was extremely successful, and helped reignite a strong interest in game shows. The format of the show was different than others, it ran in prime time, and it was the largest sum of money yet to be offered.

Ever since Millionaire, new great game shows have continued to be put on in prime time television, like Deal or No Deal with Howie Mandell and Are You Smarter than a Fifth Grader with Jeff Foxworthy. And as the inclusion of "gaming" elements in "reality TV" programs might indicate, the media will never tire of finding ways to bring fun competition to the small screen. **MB**



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Brooks and Dunn - Boot Scootin Boogie ...	Def Leppard - Pour Some Sugar On Me	Tommy Tutone 867-5309	Billy Joel - You May Be Right	Alabama - If Your Gonna Play In Texas
Afroman - Cause I Got High	Abba - Dancing Queen	Bob Dylan - Stuck in the Middle With You	Big & Rich - Save A Horse (Ride A Cowboy)	Buster Poindexter - Hot Hot Hot
Beatles - Obladi, Oblada, Life Goes On	Cars - Let the Good Times Roll	C and C Music Factory - Gonna Make You Sweat	ABBA - Take A Chance On Me	Carrie Underwood - Before He Cheats

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Penn Jillette, DJ?

WELL, NO...BUT THE MASTER ENTERTAINER HAS A LOT TO TEACH 'EM

By Michael Buonaccorso

When I said earlier this year that we were going to change the game, it wasn't going to be just another tired sound bite. We meant it. And part of that new level of excitement, Penn Jillette, one half of the world-famous Emmy Award-winning magic duo and Las Vegas headliners Penn & Teller, will appear at the 2015 installment of Mobile Beat Las Vegas on Wednesday, February 25, 2015 at the historic Riviera Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas.

No, he's never been a DJ, but Penn Jillette is a cultural phenomenon as an illusionist, comedian, musician, inventor, actor, and best-selling author.

Few haven't heard of Penn & Teller, so I won't waste a lot of space with his resume and accomplishments going back 40 years. He is constantly working on new projects while maintaining many of his current ones, while also performing five or six nights a week most of the year. Penn and Teller are signed on for thirteen brand new one-hour episodes of *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*, the one-hour competition series featuring aspiring magicians trying to, well, fool them. In April of this year, Penn & Teller were given their very own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

"The only secret of magic is that I'm willing to work harder on it than you think it's worth" –Penn Jillette

As a philanthropist, his efforts have resulted in raising thousands of dollars for Las Vegas-based charities AFAN (Aid for AIDS NV) and Opportunity Village. The annual "Penn & Teller's 13 Bloody Days of Xmas" continues to be the most successful blood drive in the Vegas Valley, resulting in an average of 4000 pints donated every holiday season.



Mobile Beat Las Vegas Producer Mike Buonaccorso co-founded the magazine in 1991 and established the Mobile Beat Show, which debuted at the Las Vegas Crowne Plaza, in January 1997. He has published the first and only specific history of the mobile DJ industry, *A Different Spin*, available at www.adifferentspin.info. He has spent the last few months redesigning the MBLV experience from the ground up for 2015, and is already looking ahead to 2016 and the 20th MBLV event.



Penn's appearance and discussion at Mobile Beat will focus on how we are all part of a larger entertainment experience, making oneself relevant in the business even after many years, and honing your tools and your talents.

Randy Bartlett, another MBLV presenter, was quick to point out, "I use magic as an analogy to our clients all the time. Penn is a performer in a genre where people can say, they 'all do the same thing,' a phrase often used to describe DJs. It's not what we do, but how we do it. He got to his level by surpassing thousands of amateur magicians out there who can't even book a \$200 birthday party!"

Penn's session will be followed up by a Q&A hosted by Carr Haggerman, who was very influential in getting Penn to appear. They spent time together as actors in Renaissance Fairs many years ago. Carr's solo presentation "Top Performer: Plan Less—Succeed More!" will take place on Tuesday, February 24.

And while you're in town for MBLV, catch the Penn & Teller show from February 21-25 at the Rio Hotel & Casino. **MB**

Do you have a question for Penn? Send it to me at mb@mobilebeat.com and I'll forward it on. We'll use the best ones!

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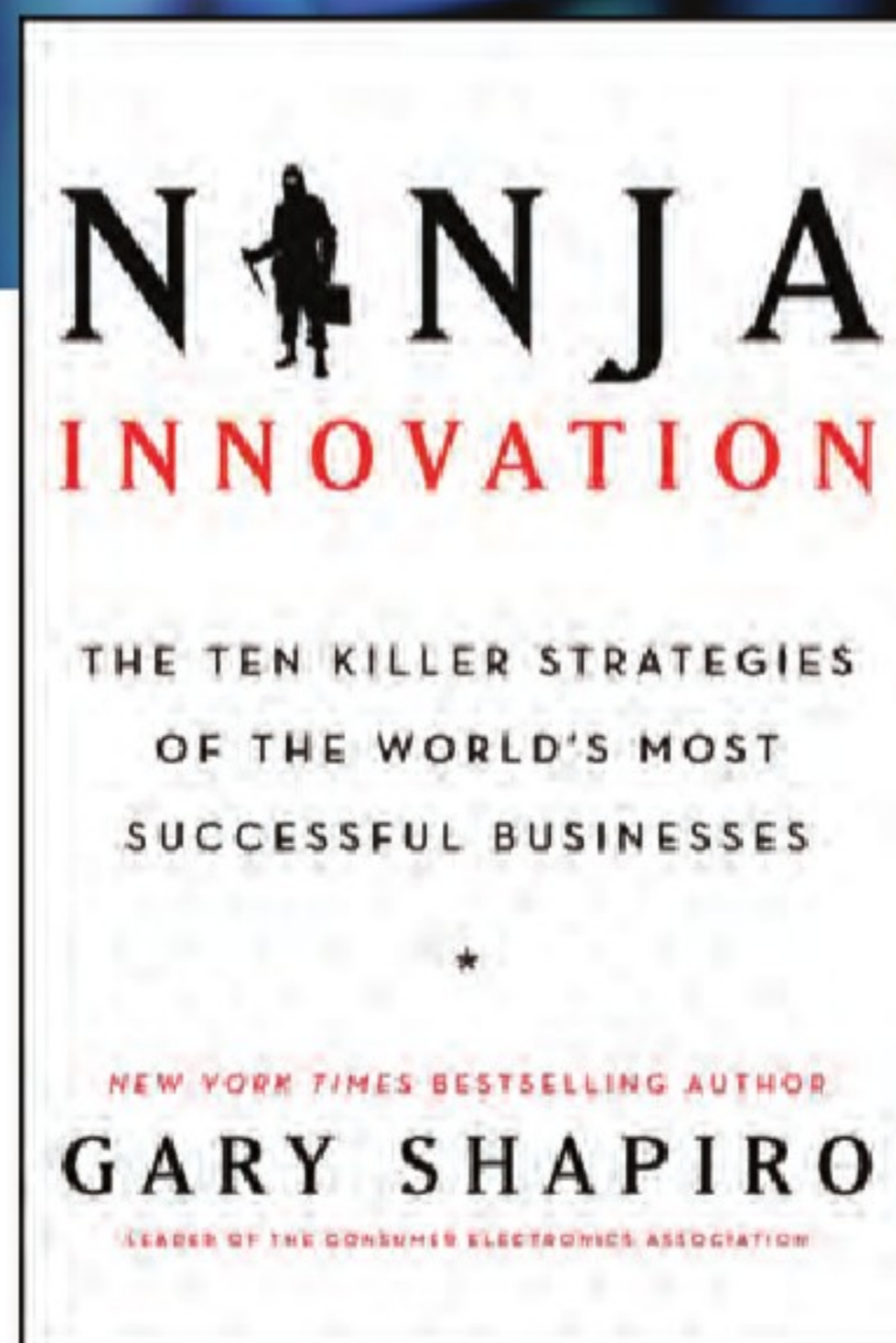
AN EXCERPT FROM *NINJA INNOVATION: THE TEN KILLER STRATEGIES OF THE WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES*

By Gary Shapiro

Many years ago I achieved my black belt in tae kwon do. The accomplishment marked the end of a journey that had pushed me to the limits of my mental and physical abilities. The test for every belt on the ladder from yellow to black was an intensely exhausting experience. Your forms had to be perfect, your placements precise and your discipline unwavering. And when you were finally finished, battered but proud of victory, it started all over again. There was always another kick to learn and another kata to master on the path to a higher belt. The test for the black belt, however, which signifies the repudiation of fear, far surpassed anything I could have imagined.

Originally, I studied tae kwon do because I thought it would be a great experience to go through with my sons and thenwife. But as we progressed together, it hit me that this wasn't just about them. I was becoming a more focused, disciplined person. I am not by nature an idle guy, so I didn't need tae kwon do to rejuvenate my passion for work or family. What it did do was shape the way I approached my job; it put everything into a framework that I have since been able to rely on for decades.

If I had to define this framework, it would go something like this: to be successful, one must set goals; to achieve these goals, one must form a strategy; and to fully execute that strategy one must never let failures get in the way. Indeed, one must use those failures to get better. I learned this simple formula through my study of tae kwon do, and I've continually applied it to



my career long after hanging up my gi.

But there's another element to this framework that defies a simple definition. It is innovation. To be successful, one has to move beyond what has come before. One must take the lessons learned through study, experience and failure, and apply them in ways that change the game, so to speak. You cannot be successful in tae

kwon do if all you do is repeat what you are taught. A beginner white belt learns this early, when he or she must spar for the first time. Your competition won't play fair; it won't do what you expect; and it will always, always fight back. When you're on the mat, you must assume your competition knows what you know; that it too has a strategy for victory. The only way you can defeat your opponent is if you do something he does not expect; you must innovate or die.

This happens to also be the fundamental lesson I have learned from more than thirty years working and leading the most dynamic industry on the planet: the consumer electronics industry. You could measure our success through dollars and cents—and indeed, these are impressive in their own right. But that's not how I measure our achievements. For me, as for all of our members, success is defined by reaching a previously insurmountable height. What's been remarkable is that CE companies have done this again and again. The world that we live in today is unrecognizable to that of

just twenty years ago. From smartphones and wearable health and fitness devices, to 4K Ultra High-Definition TV and 3D gaming – nothing is ever static; no product is ever immune to competition; and we can never tell where we'll be in five years. The simple reason: innovation.

In *Ninja Innovation* I examine what ninjas—ancient warriors of feudal Japan—have to tell us about success in business. What can we learn from them that might help rejuvenate our passion for innovation? *Ninja Innovation* is the story of the entrepreneur who toils away at an idea; it is the story of a CEO who saves a company on the brink of collapse; it is the story of the enterprise that has everything going for it, yet fails anyway; it is the story of a corporation that time and again reinvents itself to stay dominant. What ties these tales together? What can we learn from the successes as well as the failures? *Ninja Innovation* provides the answers. **MB**

Gary Shapiro • Ninja Innovation

The Presentation

Drawn from Gary's three decades of experience leading the consumer electronics industry, *Ninja Innovation* takes you behind the scenes of today's top enterprises, uncovering their ten essential strategies for success, as well as look at the latest trends in audio from the 2015 CES show!

The Presenter

Gary Shapiro is president and CEO of the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)[®], the U.S. trade association, representing more than 2,000 consumer electronics companies, and producing the world's largest annual innovation tradeshow, the International CES[®].

He co-founded and chaired the HDTV Model Station and served as a leader of the Advanced Television Test Center (ATTC). He is a charter inductee to the Academy of Digital Television Pioneers, and received its highest award as the industry leader most influential in advancing HDTV.

As chairman of the Home Recording Rights Coalition (HRRC), Shapiro led the manufacturers' battle to preserve the legality of recording technology, consumer fair use rights, and opposing Internet-undermining legislation. He has received the exhibition industry's highest honor, the IAEE Pinnacle Award.

Shapiro leads a staff of 150 employees and thousands of industry volunteers and has testified before Congress on technology and business issues more than 20 times.

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Are You "Experienced?"

HOW BILL HERMANN AND JASON JONES WILL ROCK YOUR WORLD

Your hosts for the revamped Mobile Beat Las Vegas educational track, Bill Hermann and Jason Jones, will be bringing the power of their innovative Entertainment Experience to Mobile Beat's 2015 event. While their program is a three-day intensive that has as its primary goal "challenging wedding disc jockeys to create a moving reception entertainment experience," they will be delivering a hefty dose of the same type of creativity to MBLV attendees, throughout the event.

By creating the Entertainment Experience, Bill and Jason responded to the need they saw among their fellow entertainers to be better equipped to create experiences that make a difference for their clients and their guests—experiences that take them from simply observing to being engaged and entertained. From their point of view, a wedding reception audience is just like any other, say, at play or in a comedy club: They want to be emotionally moved and touched.

Bringing these concepts to the MBLV audience, they will touch upon aspects of wedding reception performance that many DJs may not be thinking much about—but that will increase their success in creating memorable event experiences—including storytelling, staging, directing, listening, innovative per-

forming techniques, savvy sales approaches, wedding-specific audio editing, and more. In addition to their hosting / interactive education tasks, Bill will also present his own session on "Ownership" and Jason will discuss "The Power of Your Point of View."

Explaining further how their approach is reinvigorating the Mobile Beat event, Jason says, "We've taken the entertainment value into consideration, to make it more of a show rather than just a group of presenters taking turns on the mic. So it's not only about the top presenters in the industry; it will also be a SHOW that inspires and ignites enthusiasm for the entertainment experience that mobile DJs create. We can promise that this experience will be different than any Mobile Beat conference you have been to in the past." Toward that end, they are working with CHAUVET DJ and one of the nation's top lighting designers to craft a true sensory experience of sound and light, utilizing the latest audio and lighting technology.

Ultimately, it's about connections: with ideas and between people—presenters and audience members, and attendees sharing ideas and inspiring each other. "We're working on a creative, connective experience, so people can be connected to each other as well as the ideas of the top presenters," says Jason.

For more information about The Entertainment Experience, go to www.BillCreates.com. **MB**



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Who Do You THINK You Are?

TOGETHER, DJS CAN BECOME MORE THAN EACH ONE ALONE CAN IMAGINE

By Mark Ferrell

The following are some of Mark Ferrell's musings on different aspects of how DJs think about themselves, and thus generate their reality...

GETTING REAL

"Fake" is insincere, disingenuous, false, a lie. A REALationship cannot be based on a lie. Not with your clients. Not with your audiences.

Can you make a living "faking it?" Sure you can. Just drive up the seedy streets of Vegas on a Saturday night to see people making a living by "faking it."

I believe that the wonderful people who give us the privilege of participating in their once-in-a-lifetime events deserve our honest involvement, excitement, empathy, and emotion.

And nothing less.

It's always been about you. And it's always been about us—what we can accomplish as a group. "Me" doesn't fit in to this, except to say, what can I do to help? How can I help you accomplish your goals? How can I help you lead?

You see, that's the way I see it, anyway. You're the leaders. Not me.

BEING YOURSELF: THE BEST BUSINESS PLAN

It's important to define your market. And say "no" to people who don't want to pay for what you offer. The more professional, the more entertain-



Mark Ferrell • Who Do You Think You Are?

The Presentation

How we think manifests itself in how we act. What we think of ourselves as DJs controls how often we're booked, our price, our performance, and our ability to succeed. Our collective thinking creates both the current reality and the future of the mobile DJ profession. In this session, Mark shares his vision for the future of the mobile DJ profession.

The Presenter

Mark Ferrell is the most respected speaker, trainer, and advocate for the mobile DJ industry, worldwide, having presented seminars and workshops in more than 50 cities in the US, UK, Australia, and Canada. He has keynoted several national and international industry conventions. Recognized as the mentor and trainer to the top-earning performers in the industry ("the trainer's trainer"), Mark has received honors including induction into the Mobile Beat Magazine's Hall of Fame.

Mark provides inspiration and information that helps mobile DJs serve their clientele more completely, which creates more opportunities for higher rates, more bookings, and legendary customer satisfaction. Mark conducts workshops, seminars, and discussions using speaking and presentation skills to help them accomplish that goal. From this effort, Mark has spawned more industry leaders, presenters, authors, and advocates than any other person in our industry.

ing you are, the wider the net you cast and the more you can command.

Consider Steve Martin, who started out on campuses and open mic nights while defining his market, and refining his talent and brand of entertainment. He didn't make a lot back then. But as he became more entertaining to a wider audience, his value increased and soon he was packing huge arenas.

Not everyone liked Steve Martin's entertainment. But that's not the point, right? It's those who DID that count.

Not everyone liked what I offered as a mobile DJ. But that didn't matter. What mattered is that the ones who did were willing to pay top dollar for it.

Once you achieve a certain level of professionalism and proficiency, the price you charge is the gauge by which you measure that level. Because if you're charging an average price, you are among the commodity class. How else do you know for certain? How else can you know? It's easy to say, "I could if I wanted to."

It's like a college football player saying that he could have made the NFL. You just don't know until you've done it.

Define your market. Don't let the market define you. Markets define commodities. And anyone can buy commodities. They're cheap. **MB**

Don't Eat Your Tip

SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Joe Bunn

Hopefully the title of this article grabbed your attention enough for you to stop drooling over the ads for new DJ gear, and read this instead! I promise you, it will be worth your time.

Do you know how often I hear stories of “nightmare DJs” coming to my favorite venues and doing dumb stuff? Every weekend. Literally, every weekend a vendor comes up to me and says “Oh man Joe, you won’t believe with DJ Soandso did here last week.” And guess what the number one dumb thing is that these guys do: They flip out about their meal.

Now I don’t want to start a war here about if you should or should not eat at a show, but I will tell you that showing up to a venue and walking up to the banquet captain or wedding planner and demanding to know when and what you’re eating before you even set up your speakers will get you banned from their preferred list faster than you can say “Big Mac and an order of fries.”

I once heard a wise old DJ say this in regards to eating at your events: “Don’t eat your tip!” Now what did he mean by that? It’s simple. A dinner like the guests are getting at a wedding is AT LEAST \$50. So, would you rather have a half-decent chicken breast or a \$50 bill? I’ll take the dough.

Don’t get me wrong, the majority of my brides are amazing, and ask me, in advance, “Hey Joe, do you prefer or chicken or beef for your dinner?” Am I going to turn this down? No way, but there are some tips that I’ll share now to make sure you come off as grateful and not a diva at your events.

1. Take something to eat in case you are not offered a meal. My DJ bag is stocked

Joe Bunn • Every Little Thing You Do Is Magic

The Presentation

You should never have idle time. You should always be doing something to help your business. The purpose of this presentation is to show DJ company owners that even if you have 15 DJs, but are the only full time employee, you can still get it all done. Attendees should leave with several things that they are going to implement as soon as they get back home. Being a DJ is so much more than DJing. It’s about marketing, sales, customer service, and more! It’s basically all the things you should be doing for your business but probably aren’t, from marketing to things at the gig and beyond! All those little things, get them under control and sparkling and you have MAGIC!

The Presenter

Joe Bunn started his DJ career at the age of 14 in his hometown of Wilson, NC. His mom used to drive him to gigs in her wood-paneled Jeep Wagoneer! He did shows all throughout high school, college at UNC-Chapel Hill, and eventually moved to Raleigh, NC in the late ‘90s where he started Joe Bunn DJ Company. The company grew from a couple of DJs to a staff of 17 of the area’s best mobile DJs. The company now does about 400 weddings a year and another 200+ private, corporate and charity events.

Joe has been on the board of both ISES (International Special Events Society) and NACE (National Association of Catering & Events); founded the Triangle DJ Association; written for many national DJ publications; and has appeared on television shows such as Whose Wedding Is It Anyway. He has given seminars at Mobile Beat, Wedding MBA, and other events. He consults with other DJs about improving their businesses in every aspect from branding to sales. In 2014, Joe created the PhDJ Workshop for intensive private training.



full of peanuts, granola bars, and Cheez-Its.

2. If you do get a full meal, and it’s a seated dinner, get out of the room! Do NOT sit down and eat with the guests.
3. If you don’t get offered the same meal as the guests (for instance a sandwich instead of a filet mignon)...GET OVER IT! You are still getting a free meal AND you’re being paid to be there!
4. And lastly, don’t ask. That’s right, don’t ask. If the bride has paid for a meal for you, or the venue offers food for the vendors, they will approach you and let you know when your food is ready.

I get hungry just like the rest of you, but either I, a) eat a late lunch, b) eat some snacks during the dinner at my gig, or c) eat late on the way home. I would never roll into a venue on an empty stomach, without my “snack pack” and expect someone to feed me. Trust me on this one guys. Now go out there and rock those shows! **MB**

The Dreaded Phrase: "Can I Sue My DJ?"

YES, I'VE HEARD THIS CRINGE-WORTHY QUESTION

By Rob Schenk

Unfortunately, I get this questions quite often. Too often, really. Unfortunately, the threat of a lawsuit by an angry client is real. With websites like Legal Zoom providing the gunpowder for the legal do-it-yourselfers, the potential is out there. Here are two common lawsuits that are brought against DJs.

BREACH OF CONTRACT

Out of all the claims that are brought against DJs, this one is the most common. A breach of contract to a DJ service contract occurs where the event professional either doesn't provide the services promised, or fails to deliver the entirety of the services promised.

The more successful lawsuits against DJs are those in which the DJ didn't show, or was either late or left early. The less successful lawsuits involve the allegation that the DJ's services, both as a 'performer' or 'MC' of the event, were substandard. For example, being lifeless, consistently not playing the correct music, consistently not playing the music agreed to beforehand,

or failing to perform at the proper cues.

If the client is successful in such a lawsuit, the Court will award 'expectation damages.' Expectation damages will be computed as placing the client in the position that he or she would have been had the DJ not breached. For example, let's say the DJ agreed to a 5 hour set at \$200 per hour (total contract price of \$1000). In the event that the DJ leaves an hour early, the expectation damages would be \$200. The client would also be entitled to any other incidental expenses. For example,



in the same scenario, if the DJ leaving early forced the client to keep a wedding planner around for an extra hour, the DJ would be responsible for that cost as well.

MISREPRESENTATION

Misrepresentation is a claim that the DJ intentionally misstated (or omitted) a material term of the contract, strictly for the purposes of getting the client to sign the contract. Most often, this occurs when a DJ misrepresents experience with events involving special cultural knowledge, like Hindu weddings or Bah Mitzvahs. As many professionals know, the DJ must be able to navigate various, sometimes somber, rituals and festivities, and be sensitive to what the act represents. Where the DJ 'fakes' their resume or puffs up their experience, and then fails to provide services in the manner promised, the Client may have grounds to sue for misrepresentation. Misrepresentation is an 'intentional tort.' So what does that mean? Well, if successfully proven, the Client can request 'general damages,' the legal term for 'pain and suffering.' This can be very expensive. Ouch! **MB**

Rob Schenk, Esq. • The State vs. John Q. DJ

The Presentation

What happens when people stop being polite, and start getting real? Real litigious, that is. This presentation is designed to inform and entertain the mobile DJ on common lawsuits brought against DJs. From breach of contract to misrepresentation, the DJ can find him or herself facing steep verdicts. Want the ammunition to fight off such claims? Don't miss it!

- Come to this seminar to learn the following:
- Can a verbal contract be legally enforceable?
- Can I be on the hook for pain and suffering if I'm late to the event?
- Do I need to get permission to photograph the event?
- Can I sue if my ex-client disparages me online?

The Presenter

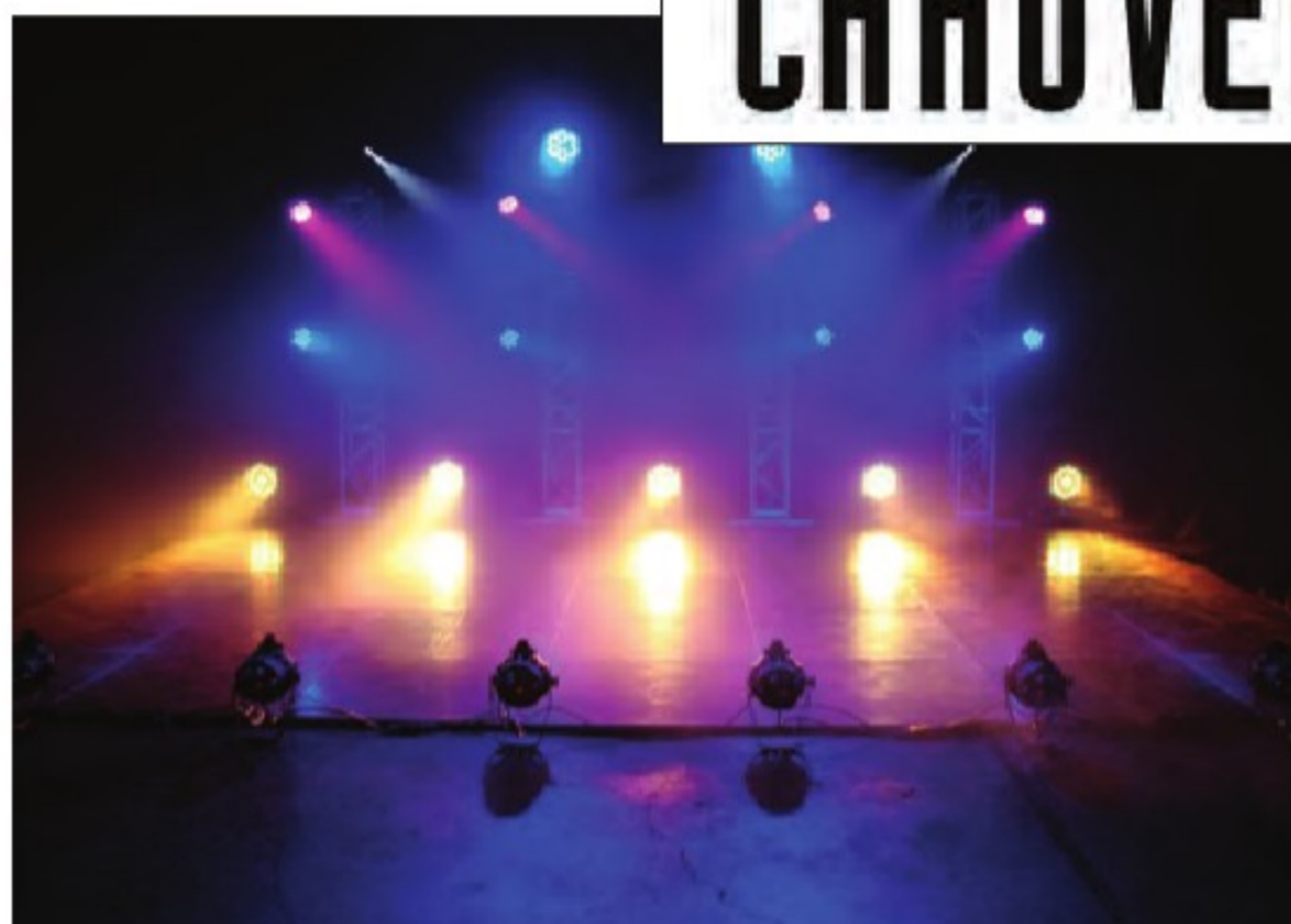
Rob Schenk started his law career at an international law firm based in Paris, France, where his job was to help French companies navigate the waters of the American legal system. After his girlfriend, a wedding photographer, requested his help with client contracts, he developed a specialty in serving the wedding industry. He says "I loved hearing the stories, learning the industry-speak, and devising ways to keep my clients protected in such an emotional and litigious culture."

Today, much of his practice is dedicated to the representing and educating wedding professionals, from speaking engagements, to maintaining WeddingIndustryLaw.com, and to the arguing in the courtroom. Rob is licensed to practice law in Georgia, Tennessee, Florida, California, and New York.

CHAUVET DJ: Bringing a New Dimension to MBLV Presentations

From the very first announcement, virtually every aspect of the 2015 Mobile Beat Las Vegas event has been promised to be a production like no other and now CHAUVET DJ will be a big part of it.

According to trade show producer Michael Buonaccorso, "The 2015 event is adding a whole new magnitude to the way our information will be presented. Attendees expect an ocular experience in the Exhibit Hall, but we will be overwhelming them in a similar way when they walk in the room for seminars! Thanks to Chauvet DJ, this is going to be a show not to miss. One thing will be certain: This is LAS VEGAS!"



"CHAUVET DJ loves any opportunity to exchange ideas and share learning with DJs," said Geoff Short, Marketing Manager/Customer Engagement & Education for CHAUVET DJ. "Mobile Beat has

always been a great event for that. But now the Entertainment Experience is recreating how learning happens at trade shows and CHAUVET DJ is excited to be a part of it. It's edu-tainment at its finest. The Entertainment Experience is going to be big, bright and bold. We're thrilled to be able to provide an incredible lighting experience to frame amazing educational and entertainment content and inspire lighting creations for DJs from all over the world." **MB**



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Sir Mix-A-Lot: Real DJ Roots

RESPECTING THE DJS WHO PLAY HIS SONG, AT MBLV

By Ryan Burger

Don't miss your chance...
At Mobile Beat Las Vegas, February 23-26, 2015, Sir Mix-A-Lot will be meeting you—the DJs that helped make his “Baby Got Back” the #1 song of the 1990s on the Mobile Beat Top 200!



Sir Mix-A-Lot, of “Baby Got Back” fame, has become an unlikely cultural icon, with a 22-year old song that repeatedly makes it way back into the public consciousness. Meanwhile, mobile DJs haven’t stopped playing this raunchy but fun party track during all these years. In 2015, Mobile Beat Las Vegas welcomes this true party legend to a “Legends” event, as part of the evening entertainment in Las Vegas, this coming February.

Ryan Burger: Tell us a little bit about how you got into this whole business, the 2-minute version because I know there’s a long story behind it...

Sir Mix-A-Lot: Well, I assume by the whole business you mean the track being played at weddings and things of that sort?

R B: Everything. I mean, going back to how you got discovered, your own record label..and then the big track and some of the other tracks that have hit.

S M: Well, you know, the abbreviated version is I was a DJ early on. That’s what I did. I mean, I was more into the scratching, cutting, backspinning, mixing, all that stuff. I was heavy into that.

And a buddy of mine, Nes Rodriguez, was a radio DJ, and in that era the street DJs hated the radio DJs. He came in, he saw me spinning; he liked what he saw. I would say and do little weird stuff on the mic and I had synthesizers and all this stuff. And this is in the ghetto, back in the day. I’d get old synths and mixers.

R B: And this is up in Seattle, right?

S M: Yeah. This is in Seattle, Washington. So Nes walked in. He said, man, you want to make records? I said, yeah. You

know, all I thought about then was I wanted to make a record so I could scratch my own voice over something else. That was the height of my expectations.

So I met with a guy named Ed Locke, and Greg Jones. We ended up doing Nastymix Records. We did a song called “Square-Dance Rap” and some other stuff and ended up doing the “Posse on Broadway,” and “Posse on Broadway” broke for me. We ended up with a platinum album and the rest is history.

And “Baby Got Back”—after Rick Rubin called in 1991, I had outgrown the independent level. Rick took me over to the majors and we did “Baby Got Back,” a song I really didn’t like initially, honestly. It was going to be a slow song like “Posse on Broadway,” and it ended up being a fast track.

And I didn’t really like it. But Rick says, “That’s the song that’s going to make you rich.” Okay. Let’s get it done. Long story short, that’s how it happened, really.

R B: Wow. So you have a song that’s popular at the time. It held on longer than the average one-hit blast of a song. And then it started coming back, being played all the time at about every event. When did that happen? Are we talking ’95, ’96 when it started coming back again?

S M: Yeah. You know, just to give you a little history here, when the song peaked out—I remember it, it went number 1, I have it on camera, actually. I was getting ready to do a show in Panama City, Florida, and I have on camera the owner of the club telling me...

So I started to think, what is the downfall of these types of songs? It’s a combination of two things. One, everybody gets sick of it, which is most common. You can’t really help that one. And two, the artist starts to deny that that’s their best song. They start to go around going, “Well, I’m bigger than that and I have more tracks.” And when you start doing that, you yank the credibility right out from under your own career.

I mean, some of the big DJs in the big stadiums, they can break a song, but the mobile DJs keep them around forever.

That being said, I said, from this point forward I will never be ashamed of the song. I will do a 10-minute version of it live. And we'll keep the song going if that's what the fans want to hear. I embraced it instead of walking away from it.

Then when the song started to come back, it had legs because it didn't have an artist running around, going "stop playing that song!"...

So when the song started to come back, I embraced it...I leveraged the publishing in ways that were kind of creative—Target ads, Burger King, Charmin and stuff like that. It had to be funny; it had to be fun; but it couldn't be cheeseball—although the Target ad might have been a little cheeseball, I have to admit, but the money was real nice.

And then all of a sudden it goes full circle and comes back to a rap artist: Nicki Minaj grabs it, and the next thing I know she has 115 million views on the video...and the song's selling like crazy.

I think the key is embrace the track; don't run from it.

R B: Understood completely. So since then, you tour regularly, you do regular shows and get out there a good amount. Where else has your career taken you?

S M: Well, yeah, it's a lot. Oddly enough, a lot of people don't realize it, but really what Mix-A-Lot does is I do a lot of business—business-business. In other words, I use my publishing in creative ways.

A lot of people didn't realize that the song "Dontcha" by the Pussycat Dolls was a redo of my old song "Swass"—"dontcha wish your boyfriend was swass like me"—so that's the kind of stuff I was doing behind the scenes. I don't get out in front of it and talk about it, because I wanted the girls to have as much success as possible, obviously.

I do a lot of that. I do a lot of technology. I'm creating some cool wearable instruments for DJs and people that do EDM music, to give them something to do onstage other than twist one knob and smoke a cigarette. So I'm trying to create that stuff.

I'm all over the place, man. I do a lot of movie stuff. We get a lot of movie placements. We work hard at leveraging publishing. I still get advances against publishing because I will try to earn the money back. I don't owe any company any money

right now; fully recouped 100 percent of the time because I constantly work my ass off to get that publishing out there, and I use it.

R B: So you have controlled your songs, your publishing to the point that you can do something with it and you're not depending on miscellaneous pennies coming back from every CD they sell that that one song is shoved onto.

S M: Yeah. And that's pretty sad. A lot of guys—sometimes deals look really good. You get some sought-after record label that offers you, "Hey, we're going to give you a \$10,000 advance on a Cadillac." You think, hey, I'm rich. And you're right. You get trickle-down after that, forever. You sign some long-ass deal where they own your masters until your grandchildren are granddads.

So I early on decided that I wanted to make sure I maintained my publishing. I used to listen to guys like Little Richard, the story of Ray Charles and things of that sort, and I listened to how guys got ripped off and how guys made it.

R B: Okay. Yeah. The other song that DJs have done a good amount is your "Jump On It" cover...Give us the lowdown on that track.

S M: You know, it's funny. I remember when I did "Jump On It," it was a nod to the Sugarhill Gang, right? Let's face it, at least from our perspective—don't get me wrong; I'm not saying there weren't rappers before Sugarhill Gang—but nationwide there was nobody.

So when "Rapper's Delight" came out it was kind of a nod to them as being the forefathers of this game. So when I did "Jump On It," we go to clear it, and find out "Apache" was a song that was actually out in the '60s or '70s or something.

R B: It goes back to a bunch of people.

S M: Yes. So we had to double-clear it. But I wouldn't dump the record. Granted, most of the publishing obviously went elsewhere, but I couldn't dump it. It was just one of those songs I had to do. It was fun. And to this day, I get people doing kind of the Gangnam-style horse dance when I play it, if I can get them drunk enough. That's why I love clubs.

I love playing clubs. I know my booking agent always goes "stop playing clubs, man." There's



way more money in the big stuff. But something about being up close, man, touching people and seeing them dance to that song especially; the whole riding the ghost horse. Who made that dance up, anyway?

R B: Mobile DJs get the goosebumps when you hit the song just right, and you see the hands pop up into the air. I had that this past Saturday. You get that connection.

S M: Yeah. You know, it's funny. I'll give you another example of being close up.

When the Seahawks won the Super Bowl and they had a big parade, there was a DJ playing "Turn Down For What." And you know how it has the build-up, the build-up—"Turn Down For What"—and he stopped it.

R B: Right at the peak?

S M: Yeah! "Turn down for what..."—stop. And he waited, and the crowd sat—boom! And the crowd went nuts. I was like, yes!

I mean, that to me—and he was right in the midst of the crowd. I mean, they were literally feet from him. And that to me is what it's all about. When I started off, that's what I was. I was kind of a mobile DJ. I had a '69 Buick deuce-and-a-quarter that I called "My Hooptie." I did a song about that, too, that was a big—that went gold itself.

And then I literally would pack my turntables, my mixer, sometimes I had to bring my own speakers and amplifiers, I would throw it all in the back of this '69 Buick and show up and do shows, man. And the mobile DJs to me, it's where great songs live. I mean, some of the big DJs in the big stadiums, they can break a song, but the mobile DJs keep them around forever.

R B: Tell us a little bit about the show that we're going to experience. You're coming onstage after DJ Jazzy Jeff. As you were saying previously, he's a legend in turntablism.

S M: Yes, he is.

R B: He's going to do a nice set with a couple of hype guys, then you're going to come on with your crowd...

S M: You know, I used to bring a lot of people, but when I looked at our show again, it looked like a bunch of guys ready to kill you.

R B: It was kind of scary?

S M: Yeah. They looked more like henchmen, right? So now there's four of us that come out; it might be five if I bring Funk Daddy. Funk Daddy's my DJ. I might bring him down and he'll make some noise because I love scratching.

I think scratching is a lost art. In a weird way it used to be an instrument within hip-hop. It was the equivalent to the guitar solo and it kind of went away. So I may bring Funk down if he has the time or if he's available.

But yeah, we come out, we do 100-percent live sets. I'm blown away by guys that are tracking their lead vocal and then rapping over the top of it. That blows my mind. If you run out of breath, do it live, okay? If you go hoarse, so what? It's live.

R B: You're doing your best and you're giving everything you can for the show.

S M: Yes. I remember I did "Posse on Broadway," this is about three months ago. The song's old as hell, but my cadence doesn't change through the whole song so I get confused. So I screwed up on the second verse. I just stopped in the middle. I said, you know what? S***, let's do this again...

It's almost like standup comedy meets hip-hop, because I will talk to my crowd. I will tell them—I will explain a song, the idea behind a song, crack jokes, a little self-deprecation, all that kind of stuff...I have a good time.

I get down—of course, as I'm known for—I bring girls on the stage. That's something I've been doing for years that's been copied time and time again by many artists.

R B: Well, I saw your Seattle Symphony performance and even the fancily dressed ladies were shaking it pretty hard.

S M: And that's random. There are no plants. We just do it every night. We never know what we're going to get...

R B: At MBLV, people are going to want you to sign autographs, that kind of stuff. I understand you're pretty open with showing appreciation to those DJs.

S M: Oh, yeah. I do. I do, man. I sign a lot of autographs. I do a lot because I was that DJ. And I remember—you know, I don't want to say the artist's name—but I remember being a DJ back in the day and I was humbled when I was asked to drive a couple of the groups around to this big, big concert we were having—and I remember how bad they treated me.

You know, I was just a DJ, just a driver. I never forgot that. I'm like, do these guys realize that we break their records? And they treated me really bad, and I said if I ever make it, I'll never do that. And talk about poetic justice. I saw them again in Texas five years later. They were opening for me. Ah, I loved it.

...So I believe, man, I treat every person—because you know, this can be over tomorrow for any artist, and they have this sense of entitlement. They don't realize this is a lot of luck. It's hard work, but the hard work is in preparation for the good luck. And when the good luck comes, you better appreciate it and scratch the back of those who helped you up there. I believe in that, 100 percent.

R B: Fantastic. Great words of advice from Sir Mix-A-Lot.

If our readers want to check out more information on you, where's the best place to go online?

S M: You can find me on Twitter @therealmix when I'm on Twitter. Somebody stole that on Instagram, so it's the TheRealSirMixALot on Instagram. And Facebook, you look up Six Mix-A-Lot, you can't miss the dude in the brim, tipping it down. You can't miss it.

And social media's kind of interesting for me because I don't do the real cheesy, predictable, "follow Michael Jordan, comment on him, and some of his followers to follow you." I don't do that. So all of my followers pretty much know who I am. We talk like family and we go back and forth. "Hey, man, I saw you at Red Robin the other day." "Yeah, I was eating a hamburger, bad for me, need to go jog." You'll see that a lot. That's me. I interact, man. **MB**

Legend Added: DJ Jazzy Jeff

The MBLV announcements keep on coming...

A legend in the disc jockey arena, for his Top 40 exploits as well as his turntablism and mixing over the last 20 years, the magnificent DJ Jazzy Jeff will be playing an extended set at Mobile Beat Las Vegas, leading up to the previously announced performance by Sir Mix-A-Lot.

DJ Jazzy Jeff (aka, Jeff Townes) was born in West Philadelphia and started spinning records at parties at the tender age of 10, using his family's basement as a training ground for his expert mixing. Since 1985, DJ Jazzy Jeff has wowed us with his flawless turntable skills, innovative production and musical versatility. From the success of DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince with partner Will Smith, to the critical acclaim of his production company A Touch of Jazz, Jeff has proved time and time again that he would always be a force to be reckoned with. And he continues to represent with his solo projects, collaborations, mixtapes and live shows. His love of music shines through in everything he does.

Over the course of his career, DJ Jazzy Jeff has achieved many accomplishments, including a DMC Championship and multiple GRAMMY and American Music Awards and nominations. **MB**



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Jason Jani: Pushing the Envelope

**CLUB/MOBILE PERFORMER/ENTREPRENEUR ENJOYS
HELPING PEOPLE OUT OF “THE BOX”**

By Ryan Burger

just became fascinated with the way some of the New York-based DJs on the radio were able to manipulate music, get people to feel a certain way, including myself and my friends.

Ryan Burger: So you've been in this for a long time. How far back does that history go?

JJ: So I've been in the industry for a little over 15 years. I've done somewhere in the area of 1,100+ weddings, 2,300+ social events. I'm very active as a performer as well as a business owner.

I didn't start off in the mobile world. I started off in the nightlife world. I was taken under someone's wing because I was fascinated by the DJ thing. They kind of gave me, I guess, my first exposure to the industry. After practicing relentlessly as a bedroom DJ for years, I was given opportunities to open up for them at different places in the Newark, New Jersey and New York nightlife world.

From that my club career expanded. At one point I was working five or six nights a week doing different bars and nightlife events. Although I had tried to do the mobile path earlier but didn't really click in with the person I was working with, when I was working in the nightlife world years later, I was being asked by people that were following me around to different bars or clubs or whatever to come and do their private events.

I was into it; I just had a few stipulations. I wanted to make sure it was going to be more contemporary, more modern. And that's essentially how the SCE Event Group was originally founded, as Sound Connection Entertainment.

From there, one event led to two events, led to 10 events, led to slowing down my nightlife schedule to do more and more privates. And over the years, five nights went to four nights, went to three nights, went to one night, went to every once in a while, and our company over the years has grown.

R B: So you intensely enjoy the club scene, the energy and all the stuff behind it, but at the same time you personally do a lot of weddings too...

JJ: I do. Right now I'm currently doing about 80 production-based wedding events a year. In addition to that I probably do somewhere in the area of 60 nightlife events a year. We do a bunch of production-based events as well, and I mean like bridal show production events. We do a number of corporate clients. We do a lot of VIP parties and marquee

Jason Jani from the SCE Event Group in New Jersey will soon be well known by attendees of Mobile Beat Las Vegas, as he provides the “glue” that ties everything together, mixing and demonstrating between the different presentations. He'll help remake the educational part of the event into something that entertains while it teaches. This club DJ-turned-mobile entertainment company owner is more than qualified for this task, with the knowledge, experience and energy gained from over 15 years in the club and mobile event trenches.

Ryan Burger: Jason, tell us how you've gotten to where you are now in your DJ career.

Jason Jani: Okay. Yeah. Thank you so much for the opportunity. I guess I got into the industry because I've always been fascinated with the way music influences people's emotions. Music is an incredibly powerful tool, and at a young age I really

private events for some of our social clients.

And then we also have a division of our company called Marquee, which is our fashion and retail division. We do a number of things in different stores. We work with a number of different brands for product launches or for hot sale events that they do.

R B: And you're about an hour or so south of New York City?

J J: Right. Our company is based in West Long Branch, New Jersey and we are about an hour south of New York and about an hour east of Philadelphia, an hour north of Atlantic City.

So we're in kind of an interesting space. The New Jersey metro area is one of the most populated, DJ-rich places on the planet. There are venues every couple of minutes you're driving. There's so many opportunities, whether it's a nightlife, social, or the private event world to work and to do different things.

R B: Tell us about the production-level weddings you're talking about. What is involved and how do you sell it? We're obviously talking much more than some uptights and a DJ, way beyond that level.

J J: Right. Most of my personal events and events that we do at SCE—very few are just music. Most of the stuff we have have a lot of different production components involved, such as intelligent lighting design. We do a lot of color-controlled uplighting. We do static image projection. We incorporate media and social media components into our events...We do everything a la carte. Everything's built around our couples, the person that's throwing the party, the visions that they have.

I challenge my clients, whether it's a couple, a corporation, a brand or whoever, to think outside the box. I don't like to do the same thing twice, ever. I always want to encourage them to think bigger and to do things differently.

We're constantly trying to push the creative bar in different directions, so things don't get stale. We put a lot of content online so that people can see it and hopefully be influenced... to think outside the traditional box and do a little bit more, to go that extra mile, to try something new; to incorporate that latest track, to do this emerging technology and figure a way to make it attractive enough that someone's going to want to embrace it and bring it to their private or social event.

R B: So when someone sees something on your site, you don't want them to say, "I want you to do that same thing," just to be inspired to be creative.

J J: Right. We want them to expect more. So if they see something they like, like I love what you did for this event at this date at this place, that's

awesome; let me take that idea and make it yours now. So it's all about ultra-personalization of details, ultra-personalization of events to make sure that every time you go out it's unique as the couple, the brand, the event, the guest of honor—whatever it is that we're there for...So for us everything is really designed from the ground up for every person that we work with.

R B: How many events are you going to be doing, not just you personally but the overall company? Give me an idea of the success levels which you've hit and are striving toward.

J J: Well, I think if you take it seriously, the sky's the limit in terms of what you can get out of this industry.

I mean, for me, in 2008 I left a career path as an engineering manager, two classes short of my MBA, to focus on my passion, because I was working to support my weekend habit as a DJ—for years. I realized that regardless of how much money I made and the benefits and the vacation time, I wasn't happy.

So I rolled the dice in the worst economic time ever that we've lived in, and it felt like a positive for me. But I also worked for it. It didn't just happen. I worked my ass off to create this thing.

And I also am surrounded by a team of amazing, amazing talent. Everyone that works for me as an event host—what most people would call an MC—everyone does this full-time as a career. No one is a part-time weekend warrior. And there's nothing wrong with that. We have weekend help that supports our events and everything. But everyone that works for us is really serious about it and we put a lot into it.

So in terms of volume, just in private and social events—not nightlife, not showcase—we do somewhere in the area of 800 events annually. And then you stick in the nightlife events, you stick in some of the show events, we added a few hundred more events onto our overall boatload, overall portfolio for the company.

R B: Okay. So, hiring and training's got to be part of it. Can you describe your approach in those areas?



JJ: Yeah. In terms of hiring and training, there's a lot of different approaches. I guess for me I look for a couple of different things. I look for chemistry. I think to be a great entertainer you have to have—you can teach a lot of it—but you have to have certain qualities, not just with meticulous detail.

You have to be personable. You have to care about what you're doing. And you actually have to have a love for making people feel good. That's what I feel we are lucky enough to do in this industry. You help people celebrate the best times of their lives. I mean, whatever crazy idea they have, whatever crazy event they're throwing, we are the ones that orchestrate these magnificent events and help people really love moments in time that can't ever be redone.

In terms of training, I guess it's kind of twofold. We often bring people in in our production support role first to put them to the test and see and determining their work ethic.

R B: Before you pour a ton into them you want to make sure they're the right person.

JJ: Right. And after we prove that or we learn that they do, then we grow them within our company, extending opportunities for them and more responsibility to them. At the same time, they're compensated more for their time, their efforts.

...We have six full-time hosts that represent our brand. We're in the process of grooming, bringing in two more to our company right now. Our six full-time hosts, to bring someone up to that level, oftentimes they have families they have to worry about. There's a lot that goes into it.

So you're not just dealing with the one person; you're dealing with a small universe of people that are impacted by what that person is doing. So the process to bring someone from, let's say, a support DJ to a host probably for me takes somewhere in the area of like two to three years.

And they can't just be a good MC. In our world they have to be a ridiculous DJ that knows how to put things together and knows how to program a night perfectly regardless of who's in front of them. Again, the talent on mixing and bringing things together has to be there.

And then they have to understand how they can use technology to influence emotions. So we do a lot with production elements like the lighting and whatnot. They have to not only understand how it works, but how to use it to really make magic moments happen for people.

So it's not something you can just teach, in my opinion, going through a program, although we do have organized training for our people. It's something that takes time, that they have to grow into. And again, it's an expensive proposition to train someone, but once we have them, I feel like what we're able to instill in them...it's something that will keep someone around for a long time.

R B: Getting back to you specifically, when you're doing an event, what are your preferred tools of the trade?

JJ: I have two different systems that I like to play on. I use different tools for different applications. I am old school; I like my Technics 1200s and I like the Rane 62. And I like the Rane because I'm also a Serato-based DJ. When I'm not using tables I use CDJ-2000s and I use a 900 mixer, both Pioneer products.

...In terms of lighting I'm a huge supporter of Elation, Eternal, Martin. For video we use a number of different tools to bring things together. And even for some of our supporting features or services, we don't just use one of anything. We often use combinations of things to achieve different effects at different times and whatnot.

R B: Where do you see things going for both yourself and the industry in general in the next few years?

JJ: Well, for us, we're a New Jersey-based company, but we do events all over the world, and we do things all over the country quite often. So for me, our company path is really just growing to continue to embrace technology and do some really, really cool things for really, really cool people all over the world. That's really where our focus is.

In terms of the industry I feel our industry is moving in a direction of personalization. People don't want what they've seen a hundred times before. Everyone's getting a little more dialed into the options available to them. And I think social media and some of the websites like YouTube and Vimeo and Pinterest have allowed people to think outside that traditional box.

And I think we have cultivated that culture here. I can see it easily being applied to a lot of different areas. And speaking to people I know for across the country, there's a lot of people now doing that, which is awesome to see. The days of "okay, it always has to be this, this and this" are kind of over. It's still there, but a lot of people are thinking bigger and different.

...I think people expect more, and they deserve more. They really do. They deserve to have an event that's theirs. And whether it's musical tastes, the vibe or atmosphere that you're going to create and how people receive the event, that is all super-important stuff and it matters. It really does.

R B: You're going to be an integral part of Mobile Beat Las Vegas, so tell us a little bit about your goals for your part of the event.

JJ: Hey. Well, I'm just super-pumped to be involved with the overall conference. I mean, Mobile Beat has always been an incredible opportunity for professionals to come together and learn about things that they can apply to their events and their craft.

For me I'm insanely pumped to be involved with the conference, to be able to be playing music in and out of the keynotes, the featured speaking content; hopefully to show people some of the things that they can do and apply to their events as well.

And I'm really look forward to meeting many of the professionals from all over the world that come to this incredible conference.

...We're going to create an experience in the segue portions of the day. So in between each of our featured presenters, we're going to try to do different themed or different musical approaches to really show people what's hot, what's new, what's working, what's not, and really, hopefully, open people's minds to some things that they can do.

We want to shift the landscape of what has always been Mobile Beat to a new, current, hip, cool experience for everyone to enjoy. **MB**

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PLAY SOMETHING WE CAN DANCE TO!



Retelling “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

NEW LESSONS ON AUDIENCE SATISFACTION FROM AN OLD TALE

By Jay Maxwell

“Once upon a time there was a little girl named Goldilocks. She went for a walk in the forest. Pretty soon she came upon a house.” Given just those few lines of the classic children’s story, we could all recite the rest of this imaginative narrative. She went into the house shortly after the three bears left their cottage because their porridge was too hot. As Goldilocks wandered uninvited through the bear’s abode, she encountered the bears’ meal, chairs, and bedroom.

Children understand that each time she tasted their breakfast, sat down in their chairs, or slept in their beds, the adult bear’s belongings were too extreme for her, while the baby bear’s items were “just right.” Goldilocks did not like, for example, Papa Bear’s “too hard” or Mama Bear’s “too soft” chair. We concentrate on the fact that Baby Bear was the only one that had possessions that Goldilocks could relate to. This story has sparked the imagination of children for years, as each new generation of toddlers let their thoughts transport them into the story where they enter a bear’s humble dwellings to discover the similarities of a family of bears living a life similar to their own. The original story ends with Goldilocks running away from the house never to return.

HARD

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT	AC/DC	80	128
2	SWEET HOME ALABAMA	LYNYRD SKYNYRD	74	100
3	LIVIN' ON A PRAYER	BON JOVI	87	122
4	POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME	DEF LEPPARD	88	85
5	OLD TIME ROCK & ROLL	SEGER, BOB	79	126
6	SATISFACTION (I CAN'T GET NO)	ROLLING STONES	65	138
7	BLACK BETTY	RAM JAM	77	122
8	MONY MONY	IDOL, BILLY	87	136
9	I LOVE ROCK AND ROLL	JETT, JOAN	82	95
10	ADDICTED TO LOVE	PALMER, ROBERT	86	112
11	ALL SHE WANTS TO DO IS DANCE	HENLEY, DON	85	116
12	WALK THIS WAY	AEROSMITH	77	110
13	MY SHARONA	KNACK	79	148
14	START ME UP	ROLLING STONES	81	122
15	ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST	QUEEN	80	110
16	HURT SO GOOD	MELLENBAMP, JOHN	82	126
17	WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU	ROMANTICS	80	160
18	ALL SUMMER LONG	KID ROCK	2008	103
19	JOKER	MILLER, STEVE	73	83
20	GIMME THREE STEPS	LYNYRD SKYNYRD	75	135
21	SUMMER OF '69	ADAMS, BRYAN	85	139
22	KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF	GEORGIA SATELLITES	87	115
23	HARD TO HANDLE	BLACK CROWS	91	104
24	TAKE ME HOME TONIGHT	MONEY, EDDIE	86	133
25	DANCING IN THE DARK	SPRINGSTEEN, BRUCE	84	148

ALTERNATE FAIRYTALE REALITY?

But what would have happened if the three bears sent a letter after this event, inviting Goldilocks and her parents to visit? First, the bears would have to fix the chair that she broke and then prepare some more porridge. No doubt, Papa Bear would be willing to give Goldilocks' father his chair and Mama Bear would wonder if Goldilocks' mother liked her meal hot or cold. Each bear would make the necessary preparations for his or her human counterpart to make them feel as welcome as possible.

This is a fairytale, so let your fantasy work its magic as you picture the story that Goldilocks tells her folks. Certainly, the part that she would be most excited about would be the "just right" things that Baby Bear had unexpectedly provided for her. Her dad, however, would wonder if Papa Bear had a good hard chair for him to relax in, and her mom would ask her if Mama Bear ate her

porridge cold like she did. If Goldilocks' parents thought that all the food and all the furniture were similar to Baby Bear's, they would probably be hesitant to accept the invitation. Once Goldilocks assured her guardians that Baby Bear's parents were actually a lot like them—just a lot fuzzier—and that they all would have a great time, there would be a play date in Goldilocks' future.

ENTERTAINING APPLICATION

The beauty in any children's story or fairytale is the moral to the tale that can be applied to real life. In this case, the connection is that we too often concentrate on what is most similar, and do not consider the things that others



Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (issue #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, **Play Something We Can Dance To**.

find most desirable. Too often at an event, I have found myself playing to one particular crowd—concentrating only on what they want to hear. Unconsciously, I am a "Baby Bear" DJ, looking at pleasing only the "Goldilocks" currently on the dance floor. In my mind, every song played needs to be "just right" so that the "Goldilocks" folks never leave the dance floor.

However, the focus should not only be on what is currently happening on the dance floor, but on the entire room. That is, my thoughts should also be thinking like a "Papa and Mama Bear" to get other folks on the dance floor by playing their styles of music too.

Too often in my career, I have been embarrassed when someone comes to the DJ table and asks me if I am ever going to play a slow song, or they ask if I am going to play this same kind of music all night long. The embarrassment is due to the fact that I should have read the crowd, not just the dance floor, to realize that people, just like in the three bears story, like different things. Some people like their music hard—like Papa Bear's chair and some like soft, slow songs—like Mama Bear's chair.

Earlier in my retelling of the story with an invitation from the three bears, I said that Goldilocks's parents would have been reluctant to go to the bears' house if the surroundings would have made them unwelcomed. Households have a variety of seating, food, and bedding to match the desires and tastes of each family member. Music is no different. "Variety is the spice of life," and DJs need to always play "just right" music all night long. Of course, what is "just right" for one group, may not be "just right" for another set of dancers. Remember that almost every event has a variety of people—different ages, different backgrounds, and different tastes. Some want today's dance music, others want country, and some oldies. For those dancers who want the best of good hard rocking standards or the best ever slow songs, check out this issue's list. Our job as mobile DJs is to play music to try and please every person at the party. At each event, we need to be ready to spin just the right song, at the right time, regardless of which member of the "bear" family comes up to us, saying, "Play Something We Can Dance To! **MB**

SOFT

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD	ARMSTRONG, LOUIS	67	72
2	HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY	STEWART, ROD	93	72
3	CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE	PRESLEY, ELVIS	62	68
4	COME AWAY WITH ME	JONES, NORAH	2002	81
5	LET'S GET IT ON	GAYE, MARVIN	73	81
6	WONDERFUL TONIGHT	CLAPTON, ERIC	78	48
7	YOU'VE LOST THAT LOVIN FEEL	RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS	65	94
8	AT LAST	JAMES, ETTA	60	59
9	ALL OF ME	LEGEND, JOHN	2014	63
10	FAITHFULLY	JOURNEY	83	65
11	UNCHAINED MELODY	RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS	65	66
12	CRAZY LOVE	MORRISON, VAN	70	79
13	UNFORGETTABLE	COLE, NAT & NATALIE	91	83
14	LET'S STAY TOGETHER	GREEN, AL	72	100
15	MAKE YOU FEEL MY LOVE	ADELE	2009	76
16	WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN	SLEDGE, PERCY	66	55
17	THOUSAND YEARS	PERRI, CHRISTINA	2012	69
18	YOU'RE THE INSPIRATION	CHICAGO	85	74
19	BECAUSE YOU LOVED ME	DION, CELINE	96	60
20	YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND	TAYLOR, JAMES	71	96
21	JUST MY IMAGINATION	TEMPTATIONS	71	93
22	STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT	SINATRA, FRANK	66	89
23	ALL MY LIFE	K-CI & JO JO	98	64
24	I'LL MAKE LOVE TO YOU	BOYZ II MEN	94	47
25	HERE AND NOW	VANDROSS, LUTHER	90	75

Mike Walsh Gets Amp'd

SUCCEEDING AT HIGH SPEED

By Ryan Burger

As publisher of *Mobile Beat*, I have the privilege of meeting hundreds of DJs every year, and spending quality time with many of them, often on the phone doing interviews; and I'm able to learn something from every encounter I have.

When Mike Walsh of Amp'd Entertainment (www.ampden-tertainment.net) first approached me about doing a profile on

brought him on for casino parties and trivia nights, eventually moving into club nights and private parties. Mike started Amp'd Entertainment in 2011, when he decided to put his own "stamp" on the events where he was entertaining.

Mike says, "So I started working for a rental company just so I could have a steady paycheck in and then every night I would come home. I'd be working on the website. I'd be trying to book events, trying to network with people. And I really wanted to do this full-time. And there was one particular wedding planner

in Atlanta—her company probably does the most weddings in the state of Georgia. And we had a relationship prior, and I knew if I could just get this meeting I could get the ball rolling. But she always wanted to meet at 4:00 in the afternoon and I couldn't. I was at work. And so I knew in order to make that happen, I had to quit my job and go full-time with it.

"So I was actually in Lake Tahoe on a ski trip and I had just quit, and I got a call from a local night club that needed a Friday night DJ. And not knowing where I was going to get my paycheck, that really helped out. And then the first thing I did was meet with that wedding planner, and just started meeting with venues, started talking to all the contacts I had, and it just sort of snowballed from there.

From our e-mail exchanges for this profile, it's clear that Mike is all about responding to people quickly. I asked him how this habit has helped his business.

"That was a big part of it," he says. "We were losing business by not being full-time at it. So a lot of people say, well, I'm just working at it; I want to get full-time but I want to get more business. And honestly you can't really grow your business unless you just stop what you're doing and just devote yourself full-time to it, like any other business. That was what I was dealing with. I was working against myself by working my other job. I knew that I was going to make more money if I devoted eight hours a day working at my own business versus someone else's business."

So Mike made the move into being a full time DJ quickly at that point, but what he needed to do was to differentiate himself from the dozens (if not hundreds) of other DJs in the



him and his company, I saw, on the surface, a DJ who had been in business on his own for only three years. I honestly wondered if he had much to offer *Mobile Beat* readers, who are typically looking for the wisdom of experience. But then I remembered my thought about learning from anyone, and realized that Mike Walsh is another person from whom I—and we—can learn.

Mike came from a musical background and realized that he had a talent for radio. He started interning for a local radio station but realized that radio wasn't very lucrative. Then, at a bar, he saw a DJ and MC working and asked them if they were hiring. While they didn't have an opportunities in the DJ area, they

Atlanta market, and he did this through the "Remixed Weddings" concept.

"Our concept is live mashups and mixes for weddings," he explains. "So if you've ever heard of Girl Talk, which is a very popular DJ set, mixing Madonna with 50 Cent or Jay-Z with the Bee Gees or something like that, taking traditional wedding music but mashing and mixing it up in creative new ways. We use turntables; we use CDJs. We're not big on the controllers. But we're definitely not the DJs who just hit play and call it a day.

"We don't teach line dances. Our clients are not big into the participation dances. When you're doing a wedding in the city, it's not really fitting to do the Electric Slide or the Macarena or the Chicken Dance. I call it the "Chickarena Slide." So we really pride ourselves on being different. We're music-oriented DJs first. The skill is behind the turntables and creating great mixes and we're MCs second. So we're comfortable on the mics, but our job is to not be mic people. It's more about the music. And we find that that really works for us in our market."

When Mike took his company full time, he needed to make sure that signature style was standard for all his DJs, so he had to cut back on the staff and find a core group of people that work with him exclusively.

"So we're converting everybody over to W-2 status and they're going to be selling and branding the remixed weddings and remixed events concept. It will be proprietary. We had to take two steps back to take 10 steps forward, because we did have up to nine DJs on staff. And we would have weekends where we had nine events. And I think our brand suffered a little bit because it wasn't proprietary. We really needed to scale back. But the beautiful thing is that by limiting what we can offer, our demand is also going up like crazy too!"

So, what is Mike's "secret" for attaining relatively quick full-time success?

"I'd say be open-minded and be willing to think outside the box. You know, I've talked to a lot of other DJs and they're just sold on that they've got to be search engine optimizers and they're spending all day working on keywords and they're getting nowhere...I chose to network with the top venues in the city. I joined ISIS, NACE, some of the big organizations that were great as far as making real relationships in the industry.

"In fact we were just at a big networking event at the Fox Theater last night and making contacts with wedding planners and people who are going to refer people to your business. So I think word-of-mouth is a big thing. I think it's an underutilized industry-wide thing, that DJs are not utilizing that aspect of their business. It's like they'd rather spend money on advertising than spend the time on a handshake.

"So our biggest thing was word-of-mouth, the referrals from the planners and the venues, and then when we started to get some business and some momentum, then we decided to go on to Wedding Wire and The Knot. And those have been huge for us because I think you're a little limited if you're only relying on word-of-mouth. You need to get your message out to a broader audience."

More information on Mike Walsh and his company can be found at ampdentertainment.net. **MB**

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A Nice Day for a Black Wedding?

SOME TRULY HORRIFYING NUPTIALS

By Mike “Dr. Frankenstand” Ryan

At first thought, a Halloween-themed wedding sounded really fun. The reality ended up as a scary, gloomy, chilly affair—which was appropriate for the season.

This wedding was held the day after Halloween in an open barn in the middle of a large orange grove located in a small farm town in the central California valley. The tables were decorated in (People Eater) purple with (Ghost Busters) slime lime green napkins, dripping candles in gothic looking table chandeliers, black rose centerpieces and steel caldrons with “smoke” oozing over the sides from dry ice and water.

The wedding party was perched on a low stage with a wooden trellis backdrop decorated in black sheeting and festooned with fake spider webs.

Of course I expected the guests to be in costumes...but some went way over the top! Several guys had on black full length trench coats. Others had either monster-looking face paint or seriously scary masks. The bridal party was in all-black, the bride's maids in matching dresses with spider web shoulder straps. Two preteen flower girls, also in black, tossed black flower petals as they walked down the aisle. The bride looked lovely in a traditional white wedding gown but after the ceremony she put in fake eye contacts with red circles on them which were a freaky sight to see. The groom looked terrified. I couldn't tell if he was scared about getting married or just unnerved with the whole pagan type atmosphere.

And a tall man in a huge scary looking devil's mask stayed in costume all night long and kept bugging me to play his favorites.

HORROR MOVIE CEREMONY

The officiant had his own music system and laptop “controller.” His Peavey Escort system was adequate but this former radio announcer had the music so over-modulated that it was ear-piercing. He didn't have a mike, saying he was loud enough. Of course no one could hear the bride or groom.

At the beginning of the ceremony, as if right on schedule,

dark, heavy clouds above let loose with a deluge pouring down all around us. Heavy rain drops pounded the corrugated metal roof like a loud drum

roll. No one could have heard the ceremony even if it *had* been miked.

(While writing this, at this very point, my computer screen just went black and my computer mouse wiggled just like an Ouija board pointer—freaky!)

MUSICAL MAYHEM

The newlyweds had given me their 60+ song list, which included heavy metal songs like “Mr. Tinkertrain” by Ozzy Osborne (for the Grand Entrance). For the Father-Daughter dance, the bride also asked me to create a dance mix similar to one they found on YouTube. The mix included Fleetwood Mac's “Landslide” into “Crank That;” “The Twist;” “Gangnam Style” and The Sugarhill Gang's “Apache (Jump On It).” I spent a couple of hours editing it and it turned out pretty good. However, at the reception the Bride's “girls” chickened out. A waste of my time.



After some brief toasts, everyone preceded to the buffet line. With most of the guests back at their seats, the calm was interrupted by the shattering of a glass plate. Looking toward the buffet line, there on the ground was a 20 something female guest laid out, shaking violently. Turns out she had a seizure and fell, hitting her head hard on the cement pad. Being so far from town even with a quick call to 911 it was still over a half an hour before a fire truck and ambulance arrived. I noticed the injured guest's eyes

were wide open but “no one was home.” Finally she became somewhat responsive, was strapped onto a stretcher and rolled to out the ambulance, her arms lifted straight up like injured football player giving us the thumbs up.

After that incident the rest of the evening had a somber feel to it. Dancing was iffy at best as the bride and groom's song list didn't go over well with the rest of the party. (Surprise, surprise.) I adjusted the music and was able to fill the dance floor but by then the weather turned so cold you could see your breath, which added to the eerie atmosphere.

Security is always present at this venue and the guards were able to stop several guys who were sneaking alcoholic drinks in the bride's ready room. Bringing booze into a venue can cause the loss of its business license. The venue owner was not in the mood for any more legal issues, as she was trying to recuperate from a recent, serious rear-end car accident involving a distracted driver on a cellphone. Her neck, now in a full brace, was nearly broken and while in the hospital she

suffered a minor stroke, which partially paralyzed her, leaving me and the wait staff to run this “hellish” wedding.

I learned a long time ago to always expect the unexpected at my events. This one had a long list of songs that no one danced to, a medical emergency, scary looking guests, foul weather and illegal drinking. With lots of tricks, this Halloween wedding was not much of a treat! **MB**



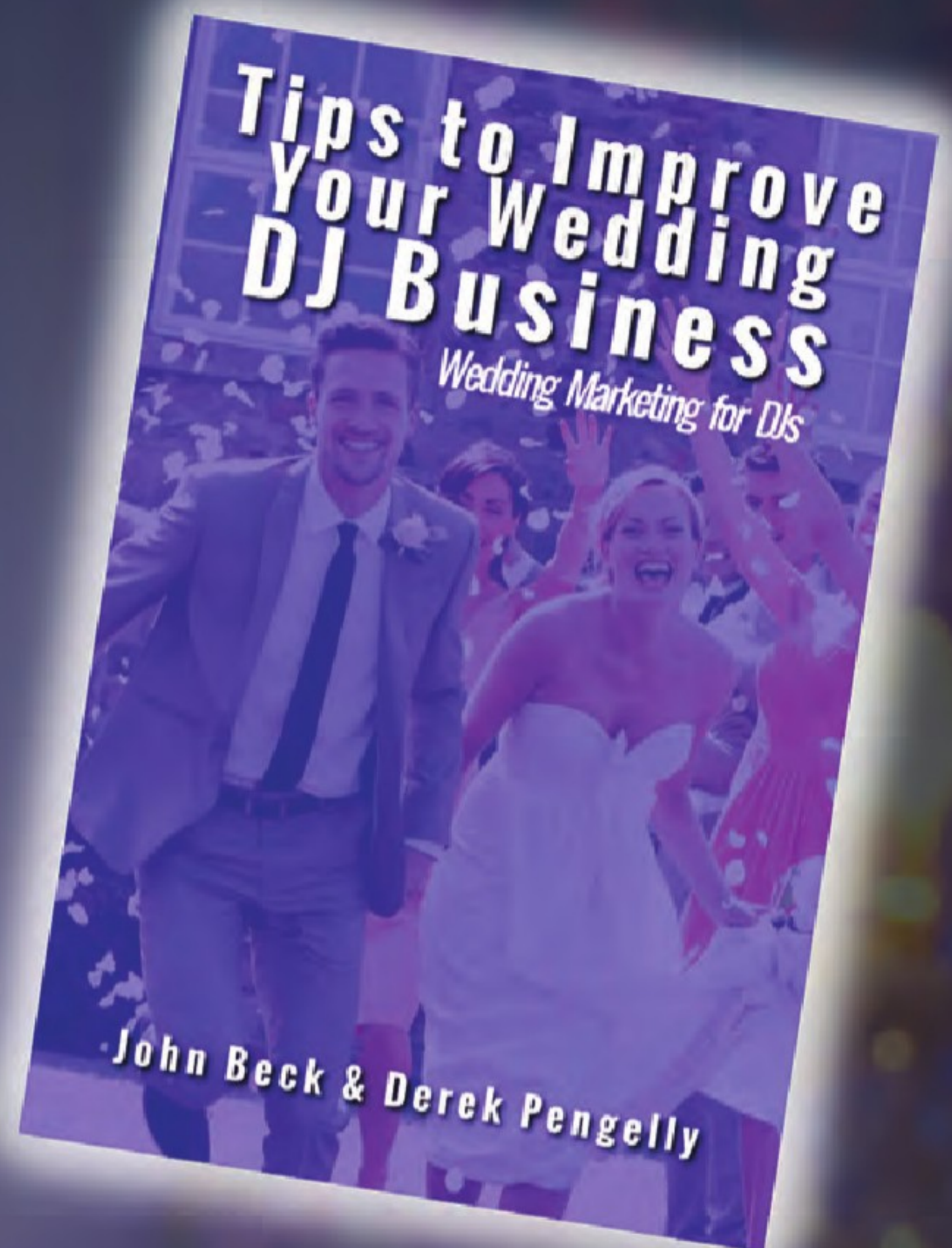
Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio, and has been a DJ in the SoCal radio market on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike. He is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands.

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By Ryan Burger



Twenty-plus years ago I first encountered High Energy Lighting and Brent Green. In the years that have passed, the company has grown into a big business, serving DJs in Texas, across the United States and into Latin America.

Brent's personal history with lighting goes back to the Grand Ole Opry, when he lived in Nashville. His Dad had a country hit or two and afforded him the opportunities to hang out with people like Roy Clark and Willie Nelson.

After moving back to Austin and being Willie's neighbor, Brent had an opportunity to use his electronic skills. "[Willie] and my dad were going to play for fun at a small concert hall in Austin, and I'd gone there with him a couple of days earlier to see somebody else...and I noticed that all they had was some white outdoor flood lights screwed to the ceiling aiming down to the

stage. And I said, 'Naw, I remember the Grand Ole Opry; y'all got to have more lights than that. Hell, don't worry about it; leave it to me.' I had a job and I already had a little money, so I made some lights—about 12 of them, red, blue, and green—and just ran a 100-foot snake. No dimmer packs or controllers; I just ran a snake back to a board I made with six home light dimmers. And I changed colors on them all night long."

From then on, Brent started sending out his lights seven nights a week and he continued to build lighting and eventually led to High Energy Lighting. And as gear purchases have shifted toward the internet, the company's website, Cheaplights.Com has become the focus of their overall branding.

Cheaplights.Com carries a wide variety of lighting and sound gear from other companies, but primarily offers their own lines of lighting and sound: StageApe and SpeakerMax. The name StageApe comes from slang for a roadie who really knows his stuff, and SpeakerMax I can only assume comes from the concept of getting as much sound out of your speakers as possible. Several other brand names are in development, but they are best known for those two brands.

StageApe and SpeakerMax are both house brands only sold by CheapLights.Com either in one of its three stores or on its website. I would compare them best to house brands like "Sam's Choice" available only at Wal-Mart—basically good solid products; not always the innovative new products you might find with other companies but good stuff, at prices below where everyone else is selling similar stuff.

The secret in this is buying just right and that's exactly what Brent has been able to do for the customers of CheapLights.Com. The manufacturers overseas pitch him on a product, he has them send him one, he tries it out, and people like Michael Moore, the managing director of High Energy Lighting/CheapLights.Com take a crack at it, doing heavy testing to check output, writing manuals on it and more.

Michael has been with CheapLights.Com for nearly 20 years. He says, "We try to give everybody





as much information as possible. We are entry-level—obviously being on the cheaper end, we are the company that maybe somebody starting off in this industry is looking for...to not spend too much money getting into it because they don't know if they want to or not. And also, the experienced professional who wants to build a large lighting system but doesn't want to drop \$10K to do it"

Dave Kurly, the sales manager at CheapLights.Com explains it this way: "DJs, they're coming here because they want their look. They want to have their gigs pop. They want to have fancy lights. They want to have the WOW factor...And they'll come here because they know—the word "cheap" is on the building, so people are drawn to that." He adds, "But when they come in here, the savvy ones that have been in the business for a while will... know what these lights can do, and when they see the prices they're like 'Oh my gosh!' Their money goes so far here that they feel that this helps their business."

Touring their Houston showroom, I was just amazed at the amount of product that is displayed and in stock. While I have been in most of the larger East and West coast DJ stores, and have been impressed with the product depth of those stores, I have to say, after seeing just one of Cheaplights.Com's retail stores and their warehouse, it has to be the most DJ gear I've seen in one place, short of a couple of the major lighting manufacturers. The great thing is that everything they stock is hooked up, workable and ready to be played with.

The main man in charge at the Houston mothership store is Ernie—Ernesto Gongora. He tells us that the CheapLights advantage is "having product in stock and available at the stores and nationally, too. We ship the same day. Our inventory and price—you come to us, you're going to get the lowest price in the United States. We research. We check. We know. And it's in stock today; we can ship today. If you

have questions we can answer them usually the same day."

As for the website, while not the most exciting site in the world, it's loaded with products, showing only in-stock items, categorized with other items that are similar. It goes back to the days of their printed catalogs from the late 1990s and early 2000s. I still remember that every month I would get the slick, glossy catalog of cool stuff from one place in California, and I would get the nicely copied but decidedly low-profile piece from High Energy Lighting, and back then I had to call them to talk to them about stuff, and get more information.

Now, as with most major DJ equipment retailers, the way to buy, if not local, is online or at DJ conferences. High Energy Lighting / CheapLights.Com will be having several demo rooms and space on the convention floor at Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2015 (February 23-26, 2015 at the Riviera Hotel and Casino). Find out more about Cheaplights.com brands at Cheaplights.com SpeakerMax.Com, StageApe.Com. **MB**



Hurry Up... and Wait!

LEARNING PATIENCE FROM THE PROCESS

By Stu Chisholm

As you may recall from our last episode, I've gotten a rare opportunity: the chance to overhaul my DJ business. Survival in "The D" (the current trendy term for the Detroit, Michigan area) has been brutal. As I mentioned last time, lot of my colleagues who were full-time operators have either disappeared or taken day jobs.

The multi-ops have scaled down a bit, few, if any, commanding the rates they used to back in the 1990s to early 2000s. Most added new services such as uplighting, photo booths, etc., to maintain their bottom lines. It might seem ironic to readers that I have not, since I strongly advocated this strategy in my book, *The Complete Disc Jockey*. There are many reasons, but a primary one is due to my operating out of a modestly-sized apartment, which would make it impractical to store and maintain those types of things. These facts and others have combined to dictate two important things: My business desperately needs an overhaul, but it does NOT need to become more like my competitors! In fact, it needs to become something even more distinct. This is what I've taken on. A surprise element: a lot of waiting around.

BABIES AND BATHWATER

So, to recap, my tactical, global business make-over requires three areas of attention: marketing, transportation and equipment/system upgrades, the order being an indicator of the health of those parts of the business. With everything on the table, the first thing that needs to be done, then, is deciding what stays and what goes. Even though the makeover will be top-to-bottom, it is unwise to arbitrarily change those things that are working well for the sake of change only. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," as they say. After some consultations with my wife/business partner, Janette, and a few trusted colleagues, a list of "keepers" was created.

The first was my business name. When I began, there were a lot of "[Insert name here] Productions" and "[So-and-so] Entertainment" type of companies. To my then partner and I, those all seemed lackluster and soulless. They still do. If my ultimate goal was to expand and become a multi-op, such a brand name could make perfect sense. We, however, weren't looking to bring in other entertainers, but to keep our own calendar full. To this day, my goal remains unchanged. In the 35 years I've been operating as Stu & His Crew, the emphasis has been on my own personality and style, leaving it up to my clients as to whether or not it fits the event they've got planned. The only modification, then, is a business one: the addition of "LLC."



*Stu Chisholm had been collecting music since he was about age 8 and began his DJ career in 1979. After a stint at the Specs Howard School of Broadcast Arts, he studied the DJ arts with famous Michigan broadcaster Bill Henning, interned at Detroit's rock powerhouse, WRIF, and later added voiceover work and club gigs at Detroit's best venues. He has shared his extensive DJ experience through MB columns, as a seminar speaker and through his book, *The Complete Disc Jockey: A Comprehensive Manual for the Professional DJ*.*



Join Stu online, at MobileBeat.com as he chronicles his complete company re-vamp in his blog, "From the Ground Up."

WORRY-FREE DELIVERY

Another item that made the "keeper" list was my Ford E-350 commercial cube truck. I purchased it new in 1996, so it has some definite age, which has begun to show. Pricing out some new and used vans and trucks, I eventually decided it made more sense to refurbish Vanzilla rather than replace it. (It has less than 80,000 original miles.) This wouldn't be cheap. To begin the process, I had the old, weathered and cracked rear roll-up door replaced. Next, I searched for a good body shop to "pimp my ride," at least on the exterior, and settled on the shop that is conveniently nextdoor to my repair facility. As I write this, they have been working on Vanzilla, removing the old graphics, repairing some pitting and "spider webbing" on its fiberglass body, sand-blasting rust spots where needed, doing a full repaint and, when finished, they'll be prepping it for new graphics. They estimated a two-week turn-around. It has now been four weeks. Lucky for me, I have a fairly large window, with no gigs for at least another two weeks. So I wait.

THE BIG PLAYBACK!

Few things in my DJ systems remain on the "keep" list, at least as far as my main console is concerned. When planning any changes, my primary concern is that the gear can perform anything and everything I need it to do without getting between me and my audience. I've often compared it to driving: Once past the learning curve, my attention should never be distracted by what I'm "driving." Gear should facilitate, never obstruct. Since the move away from vinyl, though, every new innovation seems to add new steps or procedures to the process of buying and playing back music. While I'm happy I don't have to drive anywhere to buy music, especially during crappy weather, or, of course, schlep crates of records around anymore, there's now the process of downloading, then properly tagging the files, running library software or "verifying" routines, etc. These are annoying, at best and horrible time hogs at worst. If possible, I'd like to remove barriers rather than add to them.

Another type of barrier becomes obvious at outdoor events: the screens on my trusty old Cortex HDC-1000 are very hard to read in direct sunlight, making my car cruises and picnics during the summer tough to do. (I've noticed this shortcoming on everything from the Denon HD-2500 to my iPhone, by the way.) Any solution needs to address this issue and, being an upgrade, I also wanted to see if I could solve any others, such as worrying about a light sprinkle, shocks/drops, etc. I managed to knock down all of these issues in the form of a ruggedized tablet computer. The model I decided

on is built for use on construction sites, or by police and other first responders who have similar demands. The tablet can do anything a laptop does, but is much smaller and lighter. I bought two of them (a primary and a backup) and will present all of the specific details and photos in a grand finale wrap-up edition. The computer is only part of the console, though. Configuring the rest introduced yet another waiting around element.

STOWE AWAY

Having radical ideas, but a limited knowledge of the most cutting-edge gear, I wanted to bring in some heavyweight, high-caliber professional help! Naturally the first person to spring to mind as a dream consultant was Ben Stowe, the gear guru from NLFX, best known for his presentations at various trade shows, especially the ProAcademy segment of past MBLV events. I dropped him an e-mail, described what I was doing and asked for his opinion and advice. Trouble is, my barrage of messages arrived right in the middle of one of those trade shows! So I had to wait. Since then, we've had some exchanges, but they are few and far between and progress is slow. One did confirm that my tablet would work with all of the non-Apple software now available. Another zeroed-in on the new wireless mic I'd need. Thus far, those have been the highlights. Still needed: router, mixer and I/O solutions. I know that Ben is a very busy guy and that I basically dropped all this in his lap, but it looks like he may be too busy to devote the kind of attention my project requires. Lucky for me, consultants aren't in short supply, but for the time being

I await further word from the best.

BUILDING A BETTER WEB

One thing I can do while waiting: continue working on my website! Since it went live in 1994, a full year before I even owned a computer, my site has been a custom affair with cutting-edge coding and features that I could never have afforded if I didn't count a brilliant IT pro among my good friends. These days, a custom look and features are much easier and cheaper to come by, so I'm hopeful that a new site will be up and running before the first of the year. There's only a slight wait on this front: for my amazing logo designer, who I've tasked with updating the great design she created during a prior upgrade. Her job is made more complicated because it has to be rendered in an extreme high-dpi version, since it also must be made into a graphic for my vehicle. At least I know that when it comes to Deb Costa, it'll be worth the wait.

So if any of you are freshening up your business in whole or in part, prepare for the fact that nobody is as excited by your upgrades as you are, and that progress may be interspersed with periods of "not much happening." Thank you for following along on my journey thus far, both here and on my blog at Mobilebeat.Com, where I post many of the pesky "devils in the details." If you have any stories of your own, or care to offer any advice, comments or constructive criticisms, please feel free to e-mail me at: DJStuCrew@gmail.com with the subject, "DJ Makeover." Look me up on Facebook, too. Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**



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Mobile-Friendly Mixer with High-End Club Cache

A LOOK AT RELOOP'S RMX-80 DIGITAL

By Michael Buonaccorso, Jr.



Looking for the perfect companion for a set of Reloop RP8000 turntables (which I reviewed in the last issue)? Look no further than the Reloop RMX-80. This advanced digital club mixer is very durable and packed with tons of extra features. Similar to the Pioneer DJM series of mixers, it is familiar in layout yet affordable in price.

My first impression upon unboxing this mixer was how sturdy it was. It is hard to find many plastic parts on this thing at all. The chassis is all metal, and the unit is relatively heavy for a mixer, weighing in at just over 15 pounds. The knobs have a rubberized coating that makes them easy to grip. The faders feel tight and smooth. The crossfader is feather light. Physically, the RMX-80 has the solid feel of a mixer that is much more expensive.

On the back of the mixer, you'll find an abundance of ports, providing all sorts of connectivity options. Four channels of RCA include both phono and line level inputs. Balanced XLR outputs are present, as well as an unbalanced stereo RCA output. There are also 1/4" jacks for booth outputs, as well as effects send and receive. A port for a Kensington security lock, on/off switch, and PC power cable port also can be found on the rear.

One thing that truly sets the RMX-80 apart from other mixers is its built-in USB hub, which allows you to plug in a USB cable from your computer, and connect up to three additional USB devices. This is definitely more practical than carrying around a powered USB hub to every gig. Unfortunately, the USB hub is only just that—a hub. It doesn't double as an external USB soundcard. This is something that would be a welcome addition on future revisions of this mixer. Also, this mixer is not MIDI compatible, meaning it won't communicate with your computer. MIDI would allow greater flexibility with DJ software programs that offer built-in features that may not be found in this hardware.

The RMX-80 also has two dedicated microphone channels, great for mobile DJs. A combination XLR-1/4" jack on the top left of the mixer serves as the connection for the first microphone channel. The second channel is a set of RCA ports also found on the top left. The easy access to these RCA ports allows the DJ to hook up an iPod with relative ease. Reloop allows this channel to double as an auxiliary just by flipping a switch directly below the ports. If you are using this channel with a microphone, an adaptor

may be necessary if your second microphone does not have an RCA output.

The mixer includes 13 built-in effects such as flanger, transformer, loop roll, and more. A huge liquid crystal display shows what effect is selected, and is clear and easy to read. The mixer has built-in beat detection and will detect and display beats per minute for both the current channel, as well as the cue channel.

Another unique capability that highlights the RMX-80's "digital" designation is a feature called "setup utility mode." This is a function that allows customization of several different factory default options. For example, you can change a setting to allow or disallow multiple cue channels from being selected at once.

The RMX-80 is a solid alternative to some of the more mainstream (read: high-quality+high-priced) club mixers. At an approximate street price of around \$1,000, it's also a more affordable alternative as well. Even though there are some features I would like to see added to this mixer to make it a fully-faceted digital DJ solution, it is built solidly, sounds great, and is a perfect mixer for mobile DJs who are looking to get into club style mixing and performances. **MB**

Stylin'

DJs who like being unique with their gear as well as their skillset (raises hand), will want to check out the colored knob cap and fader cap sets available from Reloop for the RMX-80. Available in five different colors, it's a creative way to make your gear really stand out.

www.reloop.com



Michael Buonaccorso, Jr. grew up immersed in a DJ environment, as son of pro DJ and Mobile Beat cofounder, Mike B., Sr. With an inborn curiosity about how things work, he went from repairs on old radios to lawn mowers to automobiles to sound equipment. Not surprisingly, today he holds a bachelors degree in mechanical engineering and runs his own entertainment company. He has attended every Mobile Beat Show since 1997.

MoFi Amps Up Headphones

By Ryan Burger

Blue, known for its microphones for years, has entered a new area with headphones. According to Blue, "Where digital music technology has advanced, headphones have lagged behind." They saw an opportunity to take a technological step in this area by creating headphones that are accurate, with strong bass, as compared with just loud and raw like others, according to Blue.

They sent me a set of Mo-Fi headphones to try out. First of all, I was extremely impressed by the packaging, the assortment of cables provided, the bag and most of all, the build quality of the actual headphones. The cables included sets of whatever is needed, including adapters for 1/4" perfect for DJ mixers, dual 1/8", and several long cables. The bag was well made and held the headphones well, once you figured out the way they fit in.

Now, to the actual headphones. They are heavy duty, without a doubt. Having used everything from cheap earbuds to some of the best stuff the DJ industry has offered in the last 5 years, these are among the best built, most solid headphones I have seen.

Sound-wise, these are absolutely fantastic headphones, no better way to say it. The extra amplified power of the headphones is something I'm surprised that a DJ manufacturer hasn't really done yet. (In my research to check this, I found a couple of products that I hadn't heard of, or were too low-end to be considered pro gear.)

These are heavy headphones, clearly built for studio and DJ usage. With a weight of just over 16 ounces compared to a norm of 8-10 ounces for normal DJ headphones, the weight is evident when you use them. But the weight increase is due to power—a 240mW amplifier that really puts out. The battery needed to power this amp is a 1020 mAh that will last you approximately 10-12 hours after a solid charge. The headphones feature 50 mm drivers with a low signal-to-noise ratio and an ear cup that is made to fit your ear.



Even without the amplifier going, in just "passive" mode, as you would call it on speakers, the MoFis have a great sound. But once you turn the little dial on the side to kick in the amp, the difference is amazing.

These will absolutely be some headphones that you need to see and listen to before investing \$349, but if you want some headphones that kick, you need to consider them! **MB**

www.mofiheadphones.com

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Stand and Deliver

AFFORD-A-STAND PROVIDES A FAST, SIMPLE SET-UP SOLUTION

By Mark Evans

Every once in a while, a new take on an old idea peaks your interest. The new Afford-A-Stand is just such a product, which I stumbled about few months ago. This new product comes from the same folks that make Arriba Cases, so you know you are getting a very good product. I ordered the table on a Wednesday and received it on Saturday of the same week. They make two models specifically aimed at DJs, a 30"-high table (AP290) and a 36"-high stand (AP360). The full measurements for the AP290 are 30" x 39.25" x 18", with a weight of 21 lbs. The dimensions for the AP360 are 35.5" x 39.25" x 18", weighing 22 lbs. This review is for the AP360.

The packaging was perfect and once I got the two boxes open I pulled out the case that held the table, shelf and three different

color wrap-around carpets, black, gray and white. The carpet is not cheap and feels plush, but is easy to attach to the Velcro strips on the front or back of the table. Setting up the table was pretty simple, by opening up the two sides with two legs and locking them down. The carpet was very tight at first, however, after a few times setting up, it seemed to stretch a little better. There is also a shelf that comes with this table, which is becoming one of my favorite features. The table is made of aluminum which makes it very light.

The first test came at a class reunion. I wanted a quick and easy setup for this because I was just playing background music. I brought my Yamaha StagePas 400i portable PA, the Afford-A-Stand and an iPad. I was completely set up in about 7 minutes. The small footprint was perfect, as I was in a very tight area. With the 36-inch table, it was very easy to control the iPad and volume on the mixer without having to bend down.



The second test was with my main system, which consists of a Denon MC6000 in an Odyssey case and a four-space Gator case, which I usually put on the ground. I was concerned with the shelf being too narrow but in fact this case fit perfectly on the shelf. With the cords coming out the back and off the floor it was easier to set up, plus, once the wrap goes up, all the



Pyramid Strobe
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Quatro Scan RGBW
\$199



MPP6 RGBAW
\$125



MS12 \$139

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cords are hidden. But here is the downside. Once I put the main case on the top it felt a little top-heavy. According to Afford-A-Stand, the table will support 100 lbs and the shelf will support 25lbs, which I believe it will, but I still felt that maybe because of the 18-inch depth of my rack, it felt a little wobbly.

In the final test I did a fashion show using an iDJPro and the Afford-A-Table. This setup took about 5 minutes and still looked really nice. Adding a Blizzard Stormchaser as an uplight to the front really made the table come to life. This was, by far, my favorite configuration. I now have three different tables and setups to use for various situations and events. I will stay with standard four-foot table and Scrim King skirting for weddings, or black DJ Skirt for other events. I also have a Fastset table that I use for super portable and multi location setups, but will definitely be using the Afford-A-Stand for ceremonies (the main reason why I bought it) and for shows like the fashion show and smaller events where I use the Yamaha or iDJPro systems. This table could also work for bridal shows, allowing you to hide things on the shelf like your bottles of water, extra cards, etc. (By the way, there is an extra piece of black nylon that can be attached to the back of the table for more privacy for your stored stuff.) A Velcro sign could be easily attached and removed from the carpet. My one suggestion would be to make 24-inch deep model as well as the 18-inch table. **MB**

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SPEAKERMAX OFFERS OPTIONS FOR BOTH

By Marc Andrews



\$750 SET OF DUAL 15" POWERED SPEAKERS

Back when I first starting DJing, my second set of speakers was a pair of dual-15" MTX passive speakers. They were massive and looked physically very cool. When it was all about power and crankin' it up for school dances, fraternity parties and more, that's what I used from about 1994 to 2003.

Since then, whenever I needed more power than just two single 15" powered speakers, I would go to subs, and possibly more two-ways. Well, now I have an option that goes back to my roots. I haven't seen anyone making dual-15" powered molded speakers in years; but earlier this year SpeakerMax released the Excell-215AA. SpeakerMax is a brand available exclusively through CheapLights.Com of Houston

I took these out two a middle school dances of around 250 students each, in an average (basketball) sized gym and was impressed with the punch they had, no doubt about it. I know that I was pushing them, as I was hit the clip light a couple of times during the night. But the sound coming out of them was strong and clear the entire night.

Powered at 600W peak, with XLR inputs, and 1/4" and Speakon outputs, other features (that weren't tested) include Bluetooth controls, AM/FM radio, MP3 player and an SD card/USB reader. These speakers weigh 61 lbs, and even with the great price of \$329 for each, CheapLights.Com will ship them to you for free.

15" SPEAKERS, TRIPODS, CABLES AND MIC...FOR ONLY \$400?

The other tech we reviewed from SpeakerMax/CheapLights.com is the Cesna sound system, which includes one powered 450W SpeakerMax 15" speaker, with a 15" passive clone. Along with it you get interconnecting cables, speaker stands and a microphone.

Though this isn't a system that I would recommend for weddings or larger school dances, it is a nice system to have handy for a quick portable setup, for events of, say, 100 people with some music and some spoken word. At the \$399 price point delivered to you, It's a nice basic system.

Both systems are available exclusively at CheapLights.Com. **MB**

www.cheaplights.com

Going Ape for Uplighting

STAGE APE DEBUTS WIRELESS UPLIGHT

By Marc Andrews

Uplighting has been a standard upsell for many DJs over the last five years, and it just keeps on getting easier and easier to do it through batteries, DMX, and constantly falling prices.

With their StageApe brand, Cheaplights.Com has been offering uplights for years, and recently debuted the Banquet model, featuring battery power, wireless DMX, and 6 x 12W RGBW 4-in-1 LEDs. These units are more heavy-duty than most in their price range, with a metal casing instead of a molded plastic one. Of course they are also heavier than most, due to the metal and also the large lithium cell batteries that they carry.



Built-in modes allow eight-channel DMX in master and slave modes, sound-active and manual modes. While I didn't have a wedding to take these lights to, I was able to accent

several other events for the holiday season, dressing up their scenes nicely. For a Christmas event, I put them in manual mode and was able to set each of the four color channels exactly as I wanted, to get the right effect. My only disappointment was the lack of an amber option. But all in all, the StageApe Banquet lights were just what Santa needed to look his best! **MB**

www.cheaplights.com

Meeting the LED Challenge

PRO DJ LIGHTING DOES IT WITH A \$1,250 ALL-LED LIGHT SHOW

By Marc Andrews

At the same event where I was working with the challenge of changing up my standard speaker system for a pair of SpeakerMax dual-15s, I was also using an all-new lighting rig from a new importer of DJ lighting, Pro DJ Lighting. While planning this event, I spoke with Jason Parent, the president of the Detroit-based company, and told him I wanted to work a full DJ show with only his hardware.

"I started Pro DJ Lighting because I realized that there was a need for a variety of quality DJ lighting at an affordable price. As a professional DJ for the past 18 years and always having a strong passion for lighting effects, I know what professionals want and need when it comes to lighting," Jason said.

So, we gave Pro DJ Lighting the opportunity to provide all the lights for a middle school dance. The only lighting-related items we used that weren't from ProDJ Lighting were our switch panel and extension cords. Otherwise, the gear was purely ProDJ Lighting and Jason's choice.

He chose the pieces "to review to show an affordable variety of lighting that would look and work great in any application. The Pyramid strobe is a great effect offering both a strobe and a centerpiece in one light. Great for the mobile DJ. The Beam Scan an incredible mobile effect; it's like having four independent scanners in one unit. The mini Crystal Magic ball fills the room with color at an incredibly low price. And the MS12 is a high-powered color wash strip with stunning built-in programs."

MS12 LIGHT BAR

While all the lights performed well for their purposes, let's start with my favorite light from Pro DJ Lighting, the MS12. This \$249 light bar has 12 tri-color RGB 3-in-1 LEDs, and has some really cool built-in programs. While I was only using the built-in programs on all these lights for this event, the power of this unit still came through.

MINI CRYSTAL MAGIC BALL

With these lights I was going for the goal of reproducing a mirror ball effect, but without DMX control, I wasn't able to accomplish this goal with these sub-\$75 lights. What I did get was a very cool gym-filling effect that moved to the beat of the music.

PYRAMID STROBE AND MINI-DERBY

These two lights were meant to fill the room with light. Though not for weddings where the focus is on the dancefloor, these units filled the large room nicely. The Mini-Derby is a classic double derby effect, but in a smaller format LED style. While the Mini-Derby's effect was strong across the room, the Pyramid Strobe was massive. This unit packs four RGBW 10W 4-in-1 LEDs for its colored features, which bounce off the pyramid mirrors in the middle, and 72 10mm white LEDs for the strobe effect. A combination of color spinning, strobes and cool movement, this light filled the room with color, brightness and movement.



QUATRO BEAM SCAN

I saved my second-favorite light for last. The Quatro Beam Scan is all about extremely strong break-through-the-room beams. Its built-in programs were really cool, but I'm looking forward to playing with it in full DMX mode. This light also has an old school look to it and is one you need to see on video to really get the full effect. **MB**

www.prodjlights.com

LDI Report

THE LATEST FROM THE WORLD OF LIGHTING

By Ryan Burger

LDI is an amazing trade show. Having not attended for a few years, I was really looking forward to the 2014 installment (November 17-23), and it was well worth the trip.

While not a show for DJ "end users"

gear dealers and others (such as media members like myself) were on hand to see the latest innovations in lighting and video: LED walls for hundreds of thousands of dollars; lighting manufacturers barely offering any fixtures under \$10,000; and companies that started as DJ lighting manufacturers who now offer everything

from \$100 LED effect lights to high-end lighting up around \$5,000 per unit.

Since seeing is believing, the digital edition of this MB will also feature some cool video content to check out. Just to give you a taste of what was on display, we've picked out just a few DJ-friendly companies and a product from each to focus on.

X-LASER • MOBILE BEAT MAX

Yes, the next generation of the well-named X-Laser product made its LDI debut this year, and they have absolutely turned it up to 11 with this release. The biggest change is making it so

you can mix hundreds of colors, due to an analog color mixing engine. Plus, in terms of power, they have maxxed out the 3B Class range. All this for under \$1,400.

"The Mobile Beat Max has evolved so far from our first 50mW green units," said Dan Goldsmith, X-Laser President. "Now with hundreds of colors,

graphics-quality scanners and about a watt of apparent brightness, the Mobile Beat Max really does take affordable laser shows to the MAX."

Another great thing about X-Laser products in general, is the company's high level of customer service, including help with the variances needed when using some of their lasers.

www.x-laser.com

EPSILON PRO • PIXBEAM

Epsilon Pro came to its first LDI with a "we are here!" type of booth, which earned them the coveted 2014 "Best Product Display" award at the show. (Look for video of their really cool booth in our digital magazine.) Among the many products on display, the one that attracted my attention most was the PixBeam. It's a large-format yoke head that has some great speed and powerful flexibility.

"Because the the PixBeam is a compact, ultra-bright pixel-mapping wash beam effect moving head (that is loaded with 7 CREE 10W 4-IN-1 LED lamps) DJ's will only need to carry two or four to create spectacular aerial lighting effects," said Phillip Lentini, Epsilon General Manager.

www.epsilon-pro.com

ODYSSEY INNOVATIVE DESIGNS • GLO SHIELDS

Along with all the high-tech wizardry at LDI, creative low-tech is always on hand as well. Odyssey showed another one of their "innovative designs," the Glo Shield. These are either 15" or 20" high curved transparent thermo-plastic upright shields. They are designed to have an upright sitting at the base with the shield going up around the sides. Very cool accessories to give your uplights a new dimension.

www.odysseygear.com

ADJ • INNO POCKET WASH

ADJ makes large lights, small lights and everything in between. Their mini-moving heads, the InnoPocket Wash and InnoPocket Beam are very popular with DJs. While they showed both of them at LDI, the InnoPocket Wash is the one that really caught my eye. It's a very bright little fixture that moves quickly.

Alfred Gonzales, ADJ USA Sales Manager, says "The ADJ Inno Pocket Wash provides a powerful, big fixture wash in a compact, lightweight case. Plus, it serves as two effects in one: Uplight a room, then magically transform that room into a nightclub feel with the fixture's moving head capabilities."

Probably best purchased in pairs or more, this light is cool, compact and inexpensive at just under \$300 MAP.

www.adj.com

CHAUVET • FUNFETTI

Nick Airriess from CHAUVET DJ showed us several cool products, including the impressive GigBar IRC, but they were featuring another unique product, the Funfetti. This is a high-end confetti system for those big "ta-da!" moments. It uses a motor fan instead of the compressed air or CO2 that's commonly used, working





more like a fogger than a traditional confetti cannon. It can be controlled by DMX or the included wireless remote.

Nick told us, "The Funfetti is an easy way to add confetti to your event. It's ready to use right out of the box... You get about 30 seconds of firing time with one half-pound load, but you can stagger that using DMX or even the menu buttons on the back. You can source confetti from your

CHAUVET dealer which includes color, mirror, or UV reactive finishes."

www.chauvetdj.com

BLIZZARD • G70

In the higher-end price range, but certainly not beyond a DJ's reach (with a street price just under \$1,000), Blizzard's G70 was attracting a lot of attention. This light has some amazing output



with its 7 high-output 10W CREE LEDs, and offers many options in gobo wheels and color. The prism, strobes and shake effects are very cool. Compared with other lights in this price range, the G70 seems to deliver a bit more bang for

your buck. You'd definitely need a pair of them to get a balanced effect. Check out the G70 and other Blizzard moving head lights at MBLV in February 2015—you'll surely be impressed!

www.blizzardlighting.com

OMNISISTEM • ONYXPRO 40 AND 75

The OnyxPro 40 and 75 are also moving head lights similar to the Blizzard offerings, but these are less expensive, coming in at \$599 for the 40 and \$799 for the 75. These are impressive offerings that OmniSistem has had manufactured for the US DJ market. They're 40W and 75W versions, with similar light sources. The 75 adds more gobo options and speed, along with increased brightness.



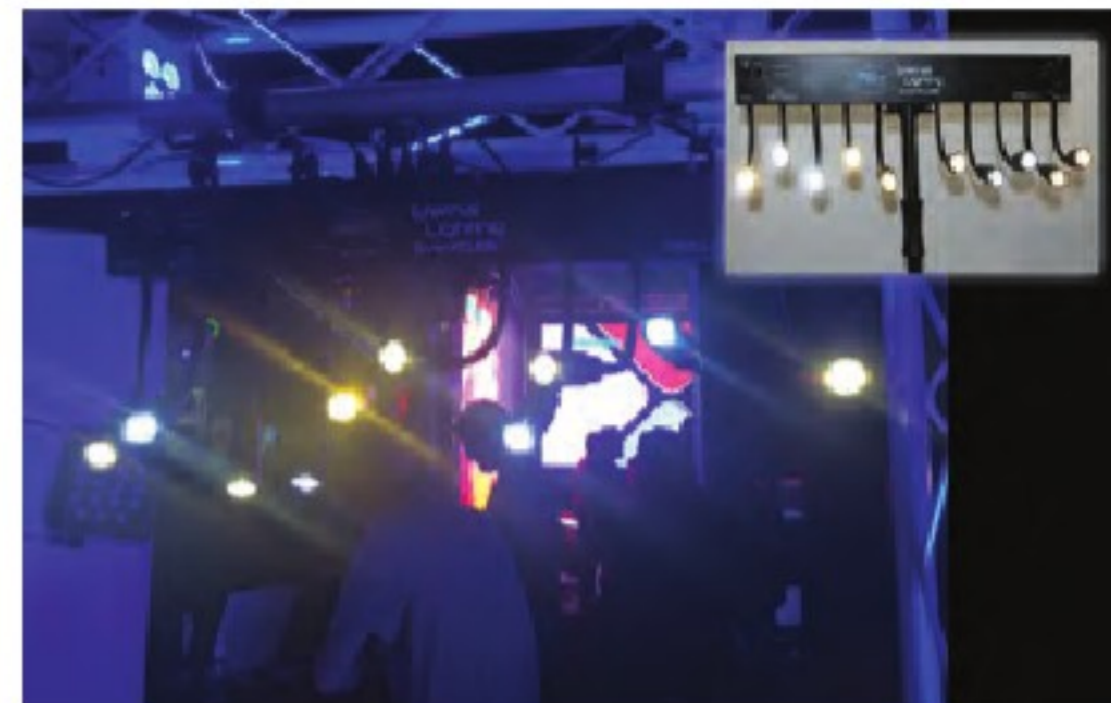
"The OnyxPro40 is a fantastic moving head light for DJs and something they should definitely check out when we show them at MBLV!" said OmniSistem's Kate Giannoulas.

www.omnisistem.com

ETERNAL LIGHTING • EVENT CUBE™

The last piece that I wanted to point out is a funky one that may require some explanation. Many DJs are familiar with the UltraPin™, which Eternal Lighting has been showing for a good amount of time (a battery powered pinspotting effect for centerpieces at weddings, and such). The Event Cube mounts 10 of them on adjustable arms that can be set to point in any direction.

"The Event Cube™ is a must have for the design element of a room," says Eternal Lighting's Mark Maillet. "We all know uplighting is popular and a great addition to make a room pop. The Event Cube allows you to put pops of light on table centerpieces, wedding cakes or any other subject that could use some light." This battery-powered, DMX-capable, remote-controllable unit, is a cool piece of lighting hardware made for the DJs who are into uplighting and more.



www.eternallighting.com

Look for all of these products and many more from these manufacturers at Mobile Beat Las Vegas in February. **MB**



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NUMARK'S NS7II MAY BE THE PERFECT CHOICE FOR SERIOUS MIXING

By Brad Dunsbergen

“The Best DJ Controller Ever Built. Period.” That’s the tagline for the NS7II from Numark—a pretty bold statement considering all of the great controllers on the market, but we will get back to that later.

The first thing you will notice about the NS7II, even before unboxing, is the weight of this thing. To say the NS7II is heavy would be the understatement of the year. Tipping the scales at a whopping 33.7 lbs and measuring 30" x 15.9" x 4.2" inches, this unit is in no way petite. With that being said, once in a flight case and loaded with the normal gear that is in a rack it really is not that bad. The weight of the NS7II can actually be considered one of its features.

Once placed where it is going to be, it will stay put—very important for scratch and mixing DJs.

Some assembly is required. The supplied platters, slipmats and vinyls will need to be put in place. This is very easy with the included hex wrench and actually—gasp—reading the manual. Once assembled and touching the vinyl you will notice how much the NS7II feels like real turntables, because they more or less are, apart from their 7-inch size as compared to standard turntable’s 12 inches. The NS7II’s all-metal exterior is painted with gloss black on top and bottom with gloss silver on the sides. The turntables are laid out logically, although some may not like it because the turntables are mirrored instead of having the controls matching on both sides.

Connections on the front and back of the NS7II are pretty standard for a mixer. Out back there’s a set of RCA inputs for each of the four channels allowing the hook up of any analog source for back-up, one combination XLR and 1/4" balanced mic input, one set of main RCA outputs, one set of booth RCA outputs, a USB port for connecting to the computer, a set of balanced XLR main outputs, motor high/low torque switch, master power button and an IEC power input. Up front there’s a combination XLR-1/4"-in balanced mic input with dedicated three-band EQ, crossfader assign for each channel, crossfader contour knob, 1/8" and 1/4" headphone inputs, cue

blend knob, split cue switch, and headphone volume knob.

Each of the decks features a seven-inch motorized platter, and according to the website “both are supported by ultra-high-resolution MIDI—3600 ticks per rotation. You also have your choice of high- or low-torque platter settings.” What this means is no matter where the platter is located it will track perfectly with the song on the computer. With the high-torque setting selected, the platter feels more like a new direct drive turntable and with the low setting it is more like an old school belt driven turntable. The bleep and reverse spring-loaded switch is located in the upper outside corners of each deck. When placed in bleep song will reverse and when the switch is released it the song will pick up where it should have been, as if it was played normally.

When placed in reverse the song will reverse and pick up wherever the song pointer is at. The stop and start time knobs can vary the start and stop time independently from instant to many seconds. The play/pause, cue and sync buttons work the same as most controllers with the



exception of play/pause, when the shift button is pressed acts as a stutter button from the last cue point. There are five hot cue buttons on each deck. When no cue point has been set on one of the five hot cue buttons it will remain unlit. To set a hot cue press one of the unlit hot cue buttons at whatever point in the song you would like, when stopped or on the fly. Deleting hot cues points is also very easy click, shift and the hot cue button that you would like to delete. The four deck selectors are located

just underneath and left and right of the platters. The left deck has selection buttons of one and three; the right has two and four. To the outside of each platter is a standard pitch fader that can be varied by multiple percentages by pressing the range button directly above the pitch faders.

The FX section contains three FX knobs and buttons. These can be used to add a variety of FX and filters. Explaining all the features and functions of the FX section is a little beyond the scope of this review. It is best to once again read the manual to get the full breadth of what the FX can do.

The mixer section has everything one would expect from a fully-fledged analog mixer with much more. Each contains the standard channel faders, three-band EQs and gain controls. One awesome feature that the NS7II has is the touch EQ kill on each EQ knob. Just touch the top of the EQ knob and it will completely kill that EQ. Each channel also features a three-way filter knob. The three modes are filter, filter FX and filter roll.

Just above the mixer section is the library selection and the booth and master volume knobs. The library selection contains 8 buttons; FWD, Back, crates, prepare, files, load A, load B and load prepare and library scroll knob.

One of the coolest new features of the NS7II is the built in Akai Professional MPC pads. According to Numark's website, "Each pad is multicolor, velocity-sensitive, and instantly switchable between 10 different modes using the Pad Mode buttons. Loop, cue, roll, sample, and slice all with effortless agility and speed while the pads light up in response and give you instant visual feedback. Go beyond mixing and effects to produce in real time, creating new music on the fly and remixing with a depth and musicality never before possible." Enough said.

Setting up the NS7II is a snap. First to be done is setting up your Mac or PC by downloading and installing the drivers from numark.com/ns7ii. Then you head over to serato.com and register for an account if you need one and download and install the latest version of Serato DJ. You next connect the supplied USB cable to the NS7II and the computer. Power up the NS7II, open Serato DJ, scan some music and you are ready to go. It is that easy. It is truly plug-and-play between Serato DJ and the NS7II.

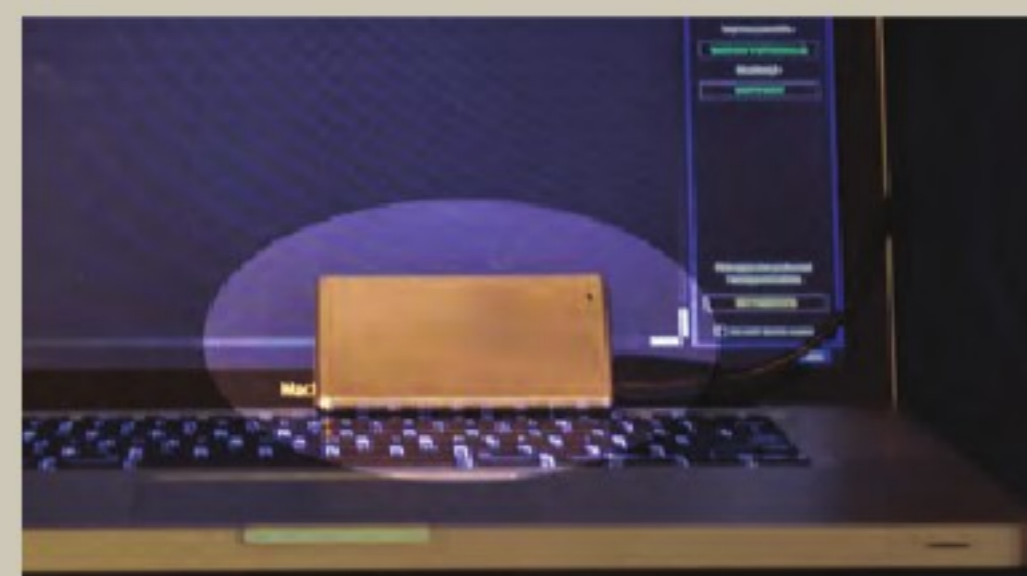
Using the NS7II is an absolute treat. I have never experienced a controller, besides the original NS7, that feels this close to using turntables. I feel that using the NS7II actually made my mixing and scratching feel tighter. Using the platters feels just like using real vinyl—minus the tone arm getting in the way. The filter and FX knobs are fun to play, and it will take your mix to a whole new level. Overall, while I was using the NS7II, you couldn't wipe the stupid grin off my face. I put the NS7II through its paces this homecoming season, using it for five gigs. The only regret that I have about NS7II is that I have to actually send the unit back, but with an MSRP of \$1,499 and a street price around \$1,299, one of these just may find a new home in my rig.

Back to "The Best DJ Controller Ever Built. Period." For some this may be true, but for others, say, those looking for a lightweight, compact controller, may want to pass on the NS7II. For those who say "To hell with the weight, I want the best!" look no farther than the NS7II. **ME**

www.numark.com

Monster Kicks into Overdrive

I recently had the chance to check out the Overdrive solid state drive (SSD) from Monster. It features an all-aluminum shell that measures a very small 2.36" wide by 4.95" tall by 0.31" thick, and weighs in at a measly 3.7oz. The Overdrive line comes in a variety of capacities: 128GB, 256GB, 512GB and 1TB. It is USB bus-powered, so no wall warts. It is USB 3.0 but is backwards compatible with USB 2.0. It promises read/write speeds of 250/150MBs respectively. It can be run on both Mac and PC.



Overall, I was really impressed with the Overdrive. I transferred about 100 music video files and it was noticeably faster than my 7200-RPM standard hard drive. The drive fits nicely in just about any pocket, and it is also tough enough to take just about any abuse thrown at it. The only downfall is the price. Comparably sized flash drives are much cheaper but are nowhere near as durable.

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Thinking Differently About DJing

THE NOVATION LAUNCH CONTROL XL AND ABLETON LIVE COMBINE TO OFFER DJS NEW OPTIONS

By Dan Walsh

The Launch Control XL from Novation is a member of the company's Launch family of grid-based and keyboard software controllers. It is specifically tailored to Ableton Live, a leader in the realm of electronic music production/performance software. While not a program mentioned often in the pages of Mobile Beat, it is, nonetheless, a tool many club/remix DJs around the world use to create and perform electronic dance music. After spending some quality time with this hardware/software duo, I can see how it can also fit into the world of the mobile DJ as well.

THE HARDWARE

First, a look at the device itself. In the box one finds a USB cable, a printed quick start guide and instructions/codes for downloading and installing Ableton Live Lite 9 software, MIDI Controller Editor Software, and 1 GB of Loopmasters Sample Content.

The Launch Control XL is a simply and beautifully designed small console, measuring 9.4"L x 9.4"W x 0.9"H with a height clearance of 1.5" for its 24 knobs. The casing is made of high-quality plastic, giving the unit a very solid feel, and its knobs and buttons are clearly designed to hit the road as well.

Out of the box, the Launch Control XL is set up to easily



Tech Specs

24 rotary pots

8 - 60mm Faders

24 assignable buttons

2 template switch buttons

26 LEDs in the buttons and 24 LEDs under the knobs

Kensington security slot

OS / Software Compatibility

Mac OS X 10.10 .1 Yosemite, 10.9 Mavericks, Mac OS X 10.8 Mountain Lion

Windows 8.1, Windows 8, Windows 7

iOS 7, 6

USB-MIDI class compliant

Ableton Live 9.1.3 or later required

control Live's basic functions. Once the Live Lite 9 software is installed, getting up and running is truly a plug-and-play operation, since it is USB bus-powered as well.

Looking at the top panel, the upper half contains three rows of eight knobs that control the software's mixer sends and panning. Using the Device button at lower right on the panel, the third row of knobs can be switched to manipulate parameters for various effects, such as filter envelopes, wet/dry levels on reverbs and choruses, delay times, and much, much more. Below the knobs are eight channel faders, and at bottom are two rows of buttons, the upper row for choosing track focus, and the lower (via selector buttons on the right) ready to control muting, soloing and arming recording for each track. Bright green, yellow and red LED lighting makes the current status of each button easy to see at a glance. Ableton Live, of course, allows for more than eight tracks, and left/right Track Select buttons (also on the right side) access them.

THE CONCEPT

The usual approach to DJing with Ableton Live is ably described by Chad Parkhill at DJTechTools.com: "Ableton's innovative session interface allows performers to trigger samples, loops, basslines, drum patterns and other sounds in real time, and manipulate

them by altering their parameters or by applying effects to them. With a few kludges--treating whole songs as sample clips and running an EQ plugin on each track at a minimum--this session view can be manipulated into functioning as a virtual DJ workstation." (www.djtechtools.com/2010/10/06/why-dj-with-ableton-live/)

That thing about "treating whole songs as sample clips" is what caught my attention, in relation to Novation's Ableton-centric controller. Mobile DJs who specialize in youth events and other gigs that call for a club-like vibe will no doubt gravitate toward the "electronic-music-creation-on-the-fly" possibilities that Ableton is known for. However, other mobiles might use it as more of a "basic" mixer, albeit a very powerful one. With whole songs loaded as clips, one can have an entire set "cued up" and spread across the mixer's channels, ready to be mixed and manipulated--in contrast to the usual deck-to-deck approach.

Along with the tracks to be "performed," a mobile DJ could also have Ableton prepared to mix any other live instruments and vocals that might be part of the celebration at hand. For a wedding ceremony or a karaoke gig, you could apply the power of Ableton's basic effects, like reverb or delay to, say, a singer and acoustic guitar--and go way beyond what a DJ mixer can do to "sweeten" the sound of the performer. Plus, you'll have to be in record mode anyway, to send this sound to your outputs, so you might as well hit the red button and preserve the special moment for the client.

Another possibility (although I'll admit I didn't have time to check it out in detail) is that Live allows you to import Quicktime

movie files (.mov) and play them like audio clips. Though not designed for "video mixing," the capability to simply play video clips could also aid mobile DJs who provide video montages and other brief visuals for their audiences.

Since the unit also comes with a software editor that allows the user to create his or her own control surface templates, for a DJ with a penchant for programming and the time to spend, it will provide many possibilities for use with a variety of setups. Yet simply utilizing the Launch Control XL in concert with the provided Ableton Live Lite 9 application makes it a new, creative tool in the right DJs' hands.

Certainly this concept won't be upstaging standard DJ mixing methods any time soon. But for the alternative way of DJing described above, the Launch Control XL is the perfect partner to Ableton's Live. Relying on mouse/trackpad and keyboard to control the software wouldn't cut it for the typical DJ performance and would probably annoy most of us enough to ditch the idea after the first try. However, with the Launch Control XL providing the tactile and visual augmentation that enables the performer to get his or her hands off the computer and eyes unglued from the screen, a mobile DJ could unlock a whole new world of performance possibilities.

(PS: If this approach to mobile DJing isn't an adventure that interests you, Novation also offers Twitch, a powerful, feature-packed, crossfader-equipped controller for Serato, which sports "touchstrips" for swipe-style track navigation.) **MB**

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Hiring Spouses?

Dear Dave,

What are your thoughts on hiring spouses?

– Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

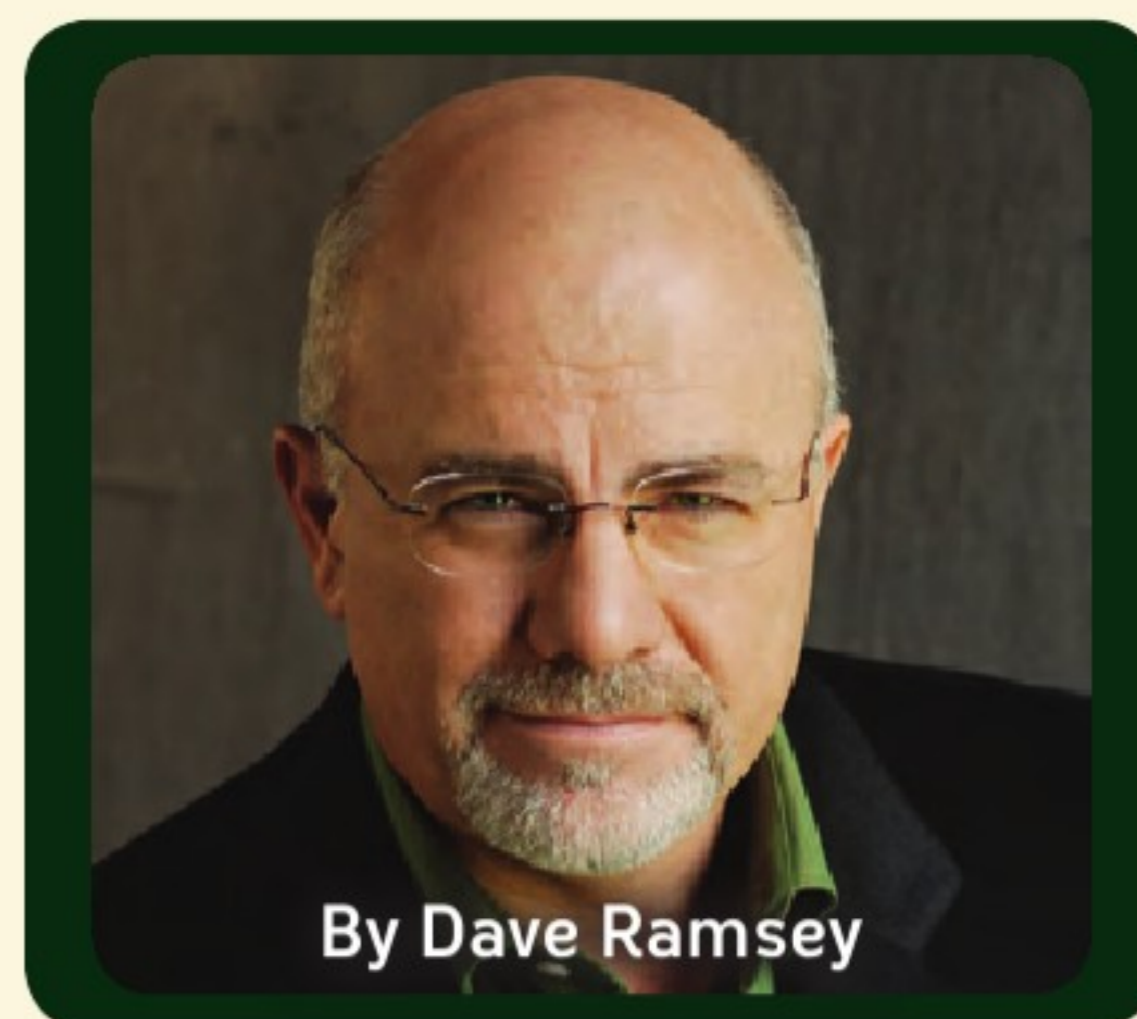
There are two ways to look at this question. If you're talking about hiring your own spouse to work at your company, I think that's a situation with the potential for real trouble.

For the most part, spouses don't do well as employees. There's a lot of room for misunderstandings and someone getting confused between being an employee and being a wife or husband. It's a really hard thing to separate for the majority of people. I think you'd have a better chance having grown children, cousins or even in-laws in that scenario, but even then there's a bigger chance for problems compared to hiring someone to whom you're not related.

If you're talking about hiring the spouse of someone who already works for you, I'd advise against that as well. It's

something we don't do at my company, and we rarely even hire the brothers, sisters or other relatives of our current team members. Now, we have people who have worked here together and then gotten married. That's a little different, and it's something we're not hardcore or corporate about. I mean, I'm not going to fire you if you find the love of your life and he or she just happens to work here too.

But here's the thing about spouses or other relatives working for the same company. If you're the boss, and you have to reprimand one, you've in a sense reprimanded the other. If you have to fire one, you've still got the other one working. How is the one who is still there going to feel and react? What's going to happen to their attitude and performance? It's almost disloyal to your spouse or close relative to stay with the place that fired them, right? It would be almost impossible for them to still have good feelings about the place. If my wife and I worked at the same company and she got fired, I'd have a hard time staying on even if she deserved it. That would be too much weirdness and drama



By Dave Ramsey

for me. I try to avoid that kind of stuff.

The point is you have to separate these kinds of roles clearly and distinctly. If you have family members working for you, they have to perform at a level above and beyond your other team members just to get respect and avoid a sense of nepotism and favoritism. This may be one of the most difficult things any small business owner can deal with.

– Dave

Mobile Beat Notes:

This is an area where DJ companies seem to be at one or the other extreme. Either the couple runs the company together,

often with the wife doing the sales and the husband being the performer/DJ (or vice versa), or one spouse totally runs the company and the other is completely

uninvolved (except for missing them on the weekends, of course). But no matter what, as Dave says, the lines need to be drawn.

Quality vs. Size

Dear Dave,

I have a newer small business that's in competition with larger, more established companies. Do you have any tips for competing with the big guys?

– Tim

Dear Tim,

This is a great question. It goes straight to the heart of being a successful entrepreneur. It's really not that hard to beat a bigger company if you connect with customers professionally and at the heart level. I truly believe if you'll do these things you'll win most of the time. Of course, a better price helps too!

But start out with a superior level of service and surround yourself with passionate and driven high-quality team

members. Quality people are an essential component, especially with a small business. Make them part of the dream and the vision of what you're trying to accomplish. Motivate them, treat them well and let them know on a regular basis they're important and appreciated.

It makes all the difference in the world when the people representing you actually care about the business and customers, and take time to create real relationships!

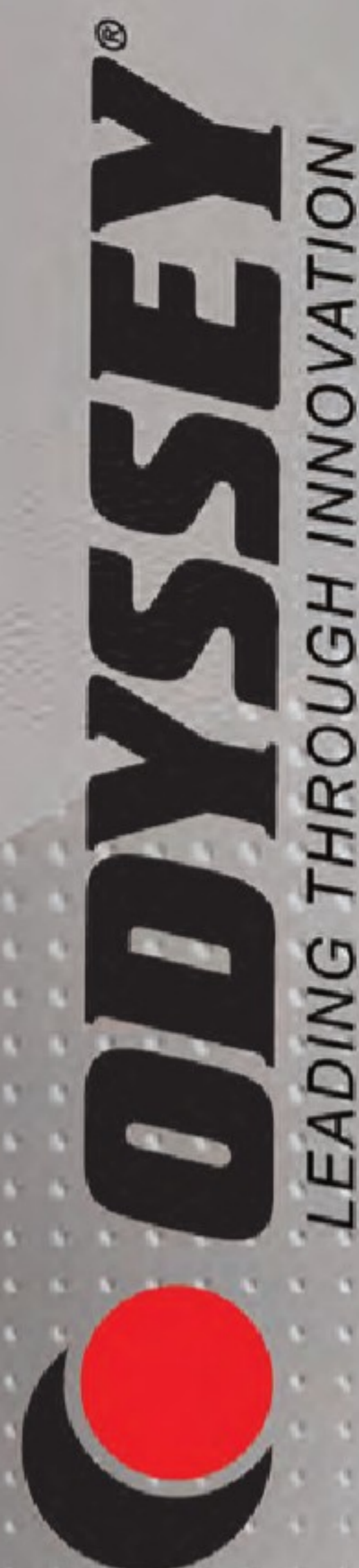
– Dave

Mobile Beat Notes:

Dave's advice is relevant to the age-old debate: to be a multi-op (multi-system operator) or not to be—to remain a single operator. As it relates to the quality vs. quantity issue, it comes down to whether you want your company doing 30-40 events a year or a 100 or more. Although the greater number will bring in more money, it may be a

recipe for burnout for single-ops, or for an impersonal, assembly-line approach for multi-ops. Were a DJ to ask Dave this question directly, he would probably say it's better to opt for fewer events, with a higher level of service, based on solid, warm relationships between owners and employed DJs as well as between all DJs and their clients. **MB**

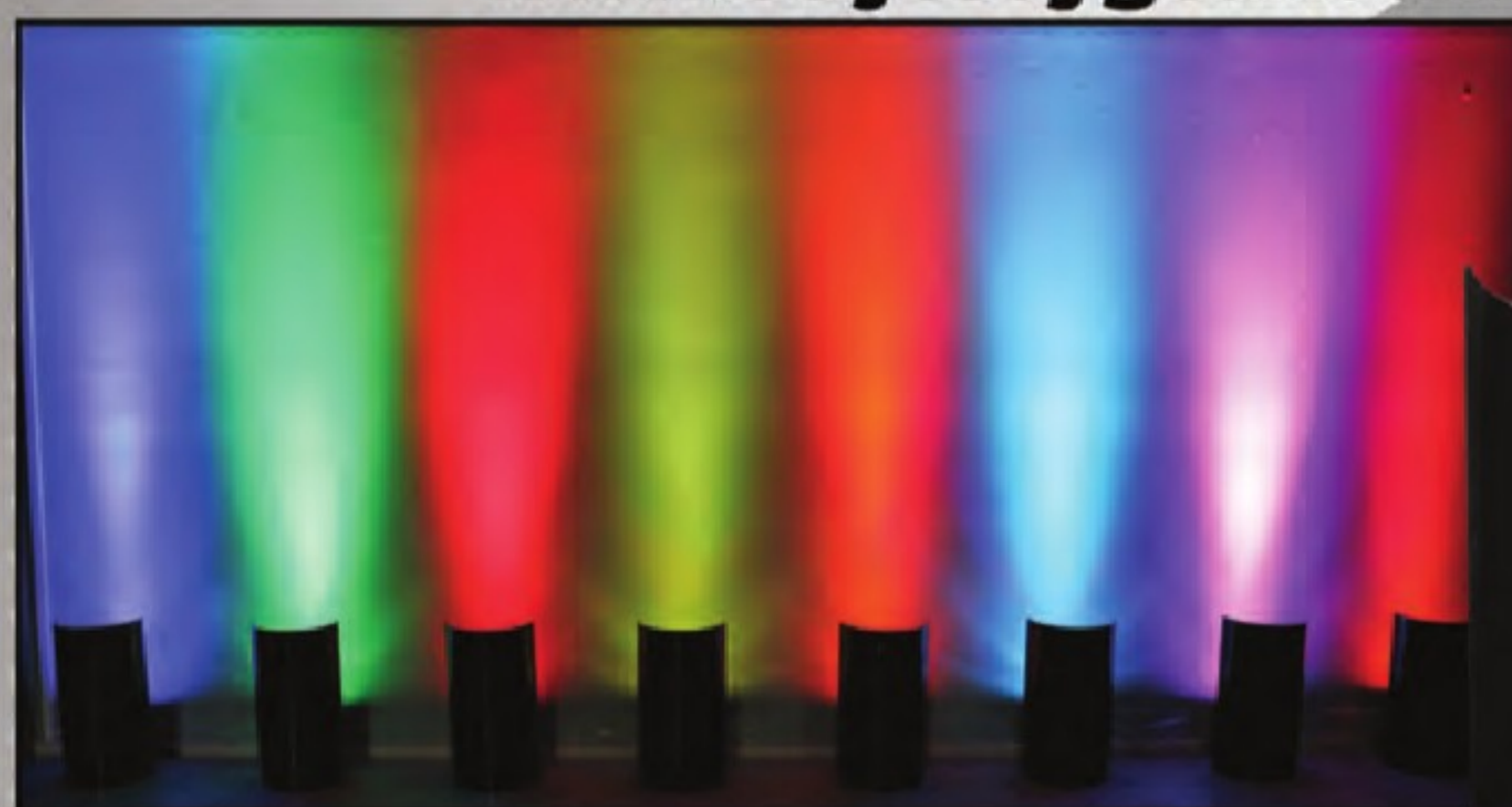
Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business. He has authored four New York Times best-selling books, including EntreLeadership and The Total Money Makeover. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 8 million listeners each week on more than 500 radio stations. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com.



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Making a Plan to Compete

GETTING READY FOR A GREAT 2015

By John Stiernberg

We've said it before in these pages. "Fail to plan, plan to fail." While it's an old saying, it is always relevant.

Successful mobile entertainers have a business plan, and the others either go out of business or limp along wondering why their competitors are doing so much better. Do you know where your business is going in 2015? Are you prepared for more intense competition as more bedroom and EDM DJs turn pro? Do you have a revenue forecast and expense budget to track your progress? This article addresses these issues and recommends three action tips for success.

ARE YOU TOO BUSY TO PLAN?

Congratulations if you consistently work 40 gigs every 30 days... most DJ's don't. Why mention this? You do not have a good reason to procrastinate planning for next year. "No time to plan" is an easy excuse, but you need to plan now more than ever.

Are you in that trap? Short of a comprehensive business plan, do you have a financial budget and set of tools for achieving it? In today's mobile entertainment world, a solid plan is essential for success.

FOLLOW THIS OUTLINE

Here's a shortcut outline to help you get started. It covers the most essential elements of a strategic operating plan.

- 1. Product strategy. What am I selling? Just music or something more?
- 2. Pricing strategy. How much do I charge? Can I raise prices?
- 3. Promotion strategy. Are my website and social media pages up to date? How do I reach my target clients?
- 4. Trade area. Do I plan to work locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally?
- 5. Sales team strategy. Do I sell everything myself, work through an agent, or a hybrid?
- 6. Target client profiles. Who do I sell to? Just weddings and proms, or are there (for example) corporate gigs out there too?
- 7. Competitor profiles. Who are my competitors? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- 8. Revenue forecast. How many gigs do I plan to perform? What is the average fee per gig? Multiply those two numbers (gigs x \$) to create your revenue plan.
- 9. Expense budget. How much does it all cost? What are the best uses of my income beyond paying for my lifestyle and taxes?
- (Editor's Note: We've talked about this before in



the Business Chops series. See the November 2013 issue of Mobile Beat for John's article on budget planning.)

GETTING STARTED ON YOUR 2015 PLAN

The most challenging part of planning and budgeting is getting started. Procrastination sets in and all of a sudden, another month, quarter, or year has gone by. This is why the ironic expression "Ready, fire, aim" is so prevalent in our industry. Too many mobile entertainers buy new lighting gear, lease a second truck, or upgrade their website without knowing why they are doing it. They fired before they aimed. You can easily prevent that problem by simply aiming before you fire. Here are

three suggestions for getting started on your 2015 plan.

Action Tip 1: Update your financials. Take a look at your history in 2013 and 2014, and then run the numbers for 2015. How much do you need to make? How far in advance are you booked? Is your pricing in line with market conditions? Also address the expense side and see where the gaps are.

Action Tip 2: Assess your position in your market vs. competitors. Determine if they represent threats or opportunities. Who are they? What are their strengths and weaknesses (especially relative to yours)? What are they likely to do differently in 2015? This part of the exercise helps create an appropriate sense of urgency.

Action Tip 3: Create your wish list. Determine if your sound and lighting rigs, sales and marketing tools, computer system, and support team have the capability and capacity to achieve your business objectives for the New Year. What tools do you need to repair, upgrade, or buy? Do you need additional help? Do you need to replace someone? Be objective.

If you've done this before, the whole process will likely take 8-10 hours spread out over a few days. Even if it is a new experience, the time invested has a huge payoff.

HERE'S THE POINT...

It's too easy to say, "I'll do the planning when I get the time." Who's got extra time? You need to book the time with yourself and make it happen. Planning is your least expensive, most powerful tool and a real competitive weapon. So get started now and don't wait until New Year's Eve to figure out what you'll be doing on New Year's Day!

Be sure to implement the Action Tips in sequence: 1) update your financials, 2) assess your market position, and 3) create your wish list.

Next issue we'll take a look at the top technology and cultural trends that will have an impact on the mobile entertainment business next year and beyond. In the meantime, best wishes for big success in 2015! **MB**



John Stiernberg is founder and principal consultant with Stiernberg Consulting (www.stiernberg.com). John has over 25 years experience in the music and entertainment technology field. He currently works with audio and music companies and others on strategic planning and market development. His book *Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters* is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at john@stiernberg.com, or on LinkedIn and Facebook. Follow him at <http://twitter.com/JohnStiernberg>.

7 Simple Actions...

...TO DOUBLE YOUR INCOME IN 2015

By Stephanie Padovani

Making just seven 10% improvements in your business can double your income. You don't have to be a genius. You just have to get a little bit better at the critical things you're already doing.



#1: ADD A COMPELLING CALL TO ACTION TO EVERY PAGE OF YOUR WEBSITE.

You have dozens or even hundreds of people visiting your website each day. How many turn into leads?

Most of those visitors land on your site, leave, and never come back, because most websites are missing a call to action: instructions designed to get an immediate response. "Click here for your free report!" or "Contact us to check our availability!"

Tell them exactly what to do and give them a good reason to do it and you will increase your leads immediately.

#2: WHEN RESPONDING TO EMAIL LEADS WHO CONTACT YOU, SET A SPECIFIC TIME FOR A PHONE CALL.

Don't try to convince them why you're the best or explain your package. Just get them on the phone with this question, "Are you available for a quick phone chat at 4 PM tomorrow?"

This works because a question is designed to get an answer, and giving a specific time means all they have to do is check their calendar and respond.

#3: ADD A DEADLINE OR LIMITED TIME OFFER.

When you meet with a potential client and quote them a price, they're going to procrastinate as long as possible. It's human nature. Give them a good reason to ACT NOW.

Bribe them to the meeting. "Every client who meets with us this week gets a free gift certificate to cover their gas!"

Use a booking incentive. "I'll include free uplighting when you book today."

Let them know that your availability is limited. "I have another client interested in booking that date and I can't hold it without a deposit..."

Provide an incentive and you'll book more gigs, faster, without having to chase anyone down.

#4: OFFER POTENTIAL CLIENTS SOMETHING YUMMY AT THE MEETING.

Studies show that people like the things they see and hear more when they are also eating something delicious, a phenomenon known as the "Luncheon Effect." When they eat a delicious chocolate or sip a warm cup of coffee, all the emotional

and chemical "yumminess" they experience is transferred to you.

#5: ADD A "KITCHEN SINK" PACKAGE THAT IS SIGNIFICANTLY MORE EXPENSIVE THAN THE OTHERS.

There's a funny phenomenon that happens around price: We judge the value of a price by comparison with

the prices around it. You can use this psychology with your packages to make them seem like a better value.

Let's say you have three packages, the Gold, Silver and Bronze, priced at \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 respectively. A potential client judges the value of these three packages together, reasoning that the Gold is the expensive and the Bronze is cheap.

When you add a \$5,000 "Everything But the Kitchen Sink" package that includes every bell and whistle imaginable, that \$1,500 looks cheap by comparison. You'll increase your average sale price as a result, and probably even book a few of those Kitchen Sink packages, as well.

#6: COLLECT THE LEAD'S MOBILE PHONE NUMBER.

People rarely pick up the phone these days. If they don't recognize your number, they don't answer and they don't call back. Most young people don't even listen to their voicemail messages!

Email is even worse. Only 11-26% of email gets opened. On the other hand, **98% of text messages are read within 30 minutes.**

Ask for their number and get permission to follow up. "May I have your cell number to confirm our appointment by text?" Bam. You've got the digits.

Now when you reach out to them to confirm an appointment, offer a special discount or remind them about the contract you just emailed, you get through 98% of the time.

#7: SELL SOMETHING ELSE TO YOUR CLIENTS AFTER THE INITIAL BOOKING.

It costs up to seven times more to get a new customer than it does to sell to a customer you already have (Frederick Reichheld of Bain and Company.) Your clients are planning a big event, which means they'll be making a whole bunch of purchases.

What else can you sell them?

It might be an upsell, like a photo booth or lighting package. It might be another service entirely, like day-of coordination or honeymoon travel. An additional offer boosts your average sales income even further.

Doubling your income doesn't have to be complicated. Simply build on the foundation you already have, make small improvements and reap the rewards. **MB**



Stephanie Padovani and her husband, Jeff, are the dynamic husband-wife duo behind Book More Brides, the #1 marketing resource for the wedding industry. Visit BookMoreBrides.com/priceshopper to learn "How to Position Yourself as a Valued Wedding Expert in Only Five Minutes."

The Non-Secret of Success: Self-Confidence

By Jeffrey Gitomer

If you want to gain NEW self-confidence, look for OLD information. Old is often new.

My morning read consisted of the following passage from Napoleon Hill's immortal book, *Think and Grow Rich*. It was all about self-confidence. And as I head into the new year, I want to make certain that I have a full dose of it.

It dawned on me that this subject would probably be the least written about coming into the new year. You will most likely receive 100 emails about how to set goals, and how to have your best year ever, and other secret formulas to attract wealth and fame.

It further dawned on me that none of these formulas or goal-setting instructions are worth a penny unless they are accompanied by your self-confidence. Unwavering self-confidence.

It further dawned on me that you probably never read Hill's

...any desire that I persistently hold in my mind will eventually seek expression through some practical means... – Napoleon Hill

self-confidence formula. And now that the book is copyright free, I thought it would be more than appropriate to share with you now.

Here is "The Self Confidence Formula" from Napoleon Hill's *Think and Grow Rich*:

First. I know that I have the ability to achieve the object of my Definite Purpose in life, therefore, I DEMAND of myself persistent, continuous action toward its attainment, and I here and now promise to render such action.

Second. I realize the dominating thoughts of my mind will eventually reproduce themselves in outward, physical action, and gradually transform themselves into physical reality; therefore, I will concentrate my thoughts for thirty minutes daily, upon the task of thinking of the person I intend to become thereby creating in my mind a clear mental picture of that person.

Third. I know through the principle of autosuggestion, any desire that I persistently hold in my mind will eventually seek expression through some practical means of attaining the object back of it, therefore, I will devote ten minutes daily to demanding of myself the development of SELF CONFIDENCE.

Fourth. I have clearly written down a description of my DEFINITE CHIEF AIM in life, and I will never stop trying, until I shall have developed sufficient self-confidence for its attainment.

Fifth. I fully realize that no wealth or position can long endure.

Unless built upon truth and justice therefore, I will engage in no transaction which does not benefit all whom it affects. I will succeed by attraction to myself the forces I wish to use, and the cooperation of other people. I will induce others to serve me, because of my willingness to serve others. I will eliminate hatred, envy, jealousy, selfishness, and cynicism, but developing love for all humanity; because I know that a negative attitude toward others can never bring me success. I will cause others to believe in me, because I will believe in them and in myself.

I will sign my name to this formula, commit it to memory and repeat it aloud once a day, with full FAITH that it will gradually influence my THOUGHTS and ACTIONS so that I will become a self-reliant, and successful person.

WOW! What an inspirational read. Seventy-five-year-old advice that is more relevant today than the day it was written.

It further dawned on me that there are probably 1,000 other self-confidence quotes that I could learn from. And that mother Google would help me find them in a millisecond. I read about 100. Here are the best ones:

The secret of making dreams come true can be summarized in four C's. They are Curiosity, Confidence, Courage, and Constancy; and the greatest of these is Confidence. - Walt Disney

If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens, you can never regain their respect and esteem. It is true that you may fool all of the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all of the time; but you can't fool all of the people all of the time. - Abraham Lincoln

Confidence is the most important single factor in this game, and no matter how great your natural talent, there is only one way to obtain and sustain it: work. - Jack Nicklaus

Self-confidence is the first requisite to great undertakings. - Samuel Johnson

Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you cannot be successful or happy. - Norman Vincent Peale

With realization of one's own potential and self-confidence in one's ability, one can build a better world. - The Dalai Lama

The way to develop self-confidence is to do the thing you fear and get a record of successful experiences behind you. - William Jennings Bryan

One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation. - Arthur Ashe

If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence, you have won even before you have started. - Marcus Tullius Cicero

Wishing you a self-confident New Year. May it bring you all of the achievement you're hoping for, and all of the success that you are striving for. **MB**

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Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of twelve best-selling books, including *The Sales Bible*, *The Little Red Book of Selling*, *The Little Gold Book of Yes!* and *21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling*. His real-world ideas and content are also available as online courses at www.gitomervt.com. For info on training and seminars visit www.gitomer.com or email Jeffrey at salesman@gitomer.com.

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Asking for Help

A SIMPLE WAY TO AVOID DROWNING

By Jason Weldon

When I was in college, I took a scuba diving class; partly because I needed to fill some elective classes and partly because it seemed like a really cool class. It turned out to be one of the best classes I ever took: I actually learned a lot about a lot of different things, like physics, the human body, air—all kinds of fun facts, which made the class really interesting.

During one of the classes, in the middle of the semester, there was a night that really stood out to me. It was a night that I still remember very clearly and I don't think I will ever forget. The instructor had brought the class as a group to the pool. He told us we would be doing an exercise on strength, stamina and asking

would be the strongest—who would last the longest and be the last to ask for help. We all started competing with the times. When it was my turn, somewhere in the middle of the class, I gave it my best effort. I tried my hardest to have the longest time. And I swear, when the last weight was thrown to me, my nose was barely above water and my heart felt like it was pounding out of my chest!

The entire class finished the exercise and we were given the results. I didn't have the best time, but I was pretty high up there. Enough to be decently proud of myself. And then the instructor said:

"Every single one of you failed this exercise."

Everyone looked at him, dumbfounded, as if he was joking.

"Seriously, you all failed" he said. "And I am really disappointed that none of you have understood what we have been trying to teach you."

At this point, we all realized that he was serious and we had screwed something up, but we weren't sure what. And then he explained it to us. I will paraphrase:

When this exercise took place, we had been in the class for a solid six weeks. In every single class, the instructors had made clear to us that water was not to be taken for granted. We could die at any point. Safety and being aware of what was going on were the most important things when scuba diving. It was drilled into us. And here we were, doing an exercise that was very simple. You are in the water. When you need help, simply ask for it.

The second we entered the water and he asked "Do you need help?" we all should have said "YES." There we were, in the water, no floatation device, just us treading water, being thrown more weight voluntarily. And every single person in the class said, "No, I don't need help, give me more weight," while having to treading water faster, getting pulled down, close to drowning.

"If you were in the ocean, in the same exact scenario, and the rescue boat came up beside you and asked if you were OK, would you say, "Yup, but before you get me, throw me some more weight?"

Wow, what an incredible lesson. How many of us don't ask for help when we don't know something? How many of us keep taking on more and more things? How many of us end up waiting until it's way too late and have to eventually give up, because we are drowning in our own creations or situations.

That exercise was a great way to drive home the point that we all need help. And the more quickly you can ask for it, the better shape you will be in. All we had to do was jump in the water and immediately say "YES!" when the instructor asked if we needed help—and then get out of the water. But NO, we all thought we were better and we all thought we could handle it.

What do YOU need help with right now? Are you trying to do it all by yourself...and pulling yourself down with unneeded weight? Is someone asking you if they can help you, but you're just ignoring them, or you don't even see them?

Don't wait any longer. Ask for some help and see how much easier things can be! **MB**



for help. Each one of us would get into the water, one at a time, with our weight belts on. Weight belts are used to control your buoyancy; you hold different amounts of weight depending on your build.

So each one of us got into the water and were instructed to tread water. We were told that, when you need help, wave your hand and we will help you. As each student went in, the instructor, every 20-30 seconds, asked if we needed help. If we responded no, he threw us another five-pound weight to add to the belt. If we said yes, we could get out of the water. The instructor continued to do this until obviously, each person couldn't hold any more weight and had to give up.

Naturally, all the men in the class were thinking about who

Jason Weldon is a wedding business consultant who specializes in small to medium-sized companies that want to grow their business. His objective is to help guide people through organizing their thoughts and laying the groundwork for a better, more successful start-up. He currently lives in Philadelphia and is also the president of Synergetic Sound and Lighting, Inc. and DJ and A/V company.



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